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THE
CAMPAIGN IN BELGIUM

1815

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QUATRE BRAS, LIGNY AND WATERLOO

A NARRATIVE OF THE CAMPAIGN IN BELGIUM, 1815

BY

DORSEY GARDNER



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PREFACE.

THE following pages are intended to afford a somewhat detailed *narrative* of the events of the campaign in Belgium during the four days June 15-18, 1815. Military criticism, as far as possible, is excluded; and where it is essential the writer has in general preferred to use the words of those entitled to speak with an authority to which he has no claim.

To excuse the addition of another detailed account of the Campaign and Battle of Waterloo to the already redundant writings on the subject, the writer may be pardoned for citing his own experience. Having occasion to acquaint himself with these events, he found, on consulting the standard authorities, that no existing narrative set forth accurately the general features of the campaign and the four battles included in it. The popular notions concerning them he found to be mostly derived from accounts prepared at the time, hastily and from inadequate information, yet which secured a standing from which they have never been dislodged. In many later writings national vanities and prejudices, disingenuous statements by the original actors or in their behalf, suppressions of evidence since brought to

light, anecdotes flattering or the reverse, obscurities generated by controversy, the use of haphazard conjecture in the place of exact knowledge—all these have combined to make the accepted story of Waterloo unintelligible and misleading. But of late years honest and capable investigators have collated the Waterloo literature of many countries and sifted out the truth from the overlying falsehood. None of them, it has so happened, has put the result of his labour into the form of consecutive narrative; yet they have made it possible for others to do so. The collecting of such an account is what has been attempted in the following pages.

As to the Campaign and Battle of Waterloo, the indispensable source of information is the *History of the War in France and Belgium in 1815*, by Captain William Siborne. The elaborate maps and plans of that work, its tables showing authentically and in detail the strength of all the armies engaged, its unabridged transcript of orders by the several commanders, and the author's painstaking accuracy and thoroughness, together with a fair-mindedness very unusual among national-history writers, render it possible to follow his account almost implicitly—as far as it goes. In his narrative of events that were known to him Siborne made his book exhaustive, and his descriptions of particular passages in battles are frequently clear and spirited, so that many of them are here cited literally. But his work is incomplete as to some essential facts which have been brought to light since he wrote (in 1844), and his general method of narration, as well as his structure of sentences, is so diffuse and involved—in a word, he is so phenomenally destitute of the power

of expression—that it is often only by repeated readings that one can get at the purport of what he had to say. Added to this drawback, Siborne wrote in the capacity of a semi-official historiographer ; so that the disclosure of his opinions about men and events was hampered by restraints of a quasi-diplomatic nature, while his blind adulation of the Duke of Wellington's military infallibility invalidates many of his judgments. In brief, no full knowledge of the Waterloo Campaign can be obtained without use of Siborne's materials, but a clear understanding of it cannot be extracted from his pages without extraneous aid—the aid, moreover, of writers greatly his superiors in military knowledge.

The means of reaching a full comprehension of the outlines of the campaign are afforded in the *Waterloo Lectures, a Study of the Campaign of 1815*, by the late Colonel Charles C. Chesney. This book—which does not comprise a narrative of the events it analyses and discusses—was first published in England in 1868 ; translations into French and German introduced it to the military students of the Continent ; and, as the product of their criticisms, and the consequent additions engrafted into its third edition (1874), we have in it the embodiment of what had been done up to that time in Waterloo criticism by the writers of England, Prussia, France, Austria, and Belgium. Without reciting the incidents of the campaign, it corrects the errors, settles the doubts, supplies the omissions of previous narrators, and—doubtless by design, though it is nowhere so declared—completes the information which is deficient in Siborne's story. The book is especially noteworthy for its merciless and irrefragable exposure of the mendacity with

which Napoleon, followed by Thiers, sought to shift upon Marshals Ney and Grouchy the blame for the French overthrow at Waterloo. It presupposes a familiarity with the details of the campaign; but it, or its equivalent, is essential to a mastery of these details.

For the battle itself, it has nowhere been outlined so firmly as in the *Notes on the Battle of Waterloo*, by General Sir James Shaw Kennedy, posthumously published in 1868. The author—who in 1815 was Captain Shaw—served on the Duke of Wellington's staff during the battle, and had an exceptional insight into its determining incidents, as well as an important part in at least one of them. His analysis and clear exposition of the several phases of the action afford a complete interpretation of what all previous accounts presented as a chaos of disconnected and incoherent struggles. Like Chesney, he was a master of those higher principles of military science in which Siborne was little skilled, and had the gift of demonstrating their application to the comprehension of the unlearned in his art. But his pages afford no more than a bare outline sketch of the grand events of the day, told with a brevity that amounts to curtness, and he leaves the details to be filled in from other sources.

Only one other of the books on Waterloo need be particularly mentioned. This is the *Histoire de la Campagne de 1815*, by Lieutenant-Colonel Charras—a work in which an accomplished military theorist goes over the events with nearly the fulness of Siborne, throwing upon them very often entirely new lights. Charras had commanded in the French army in Algeria; he had held high position in the War Office at Paris under the

Republic ; he was driven into exile and bitter hostility to Bonapartism by Napoleon III, and thus found at once the incentive, the opportunity, and the leisure to produce a work which is in its way a masterpiece. Aware of the hitherto unused stores of facts in the French War Office records, he had them searched and summarised for him by friends in Paris ; the War Minister of the Netherlands gave him access to all their archives ; he studied all previous writings on the subject ; during a three years' residence at Brussels he made repeated and careful surveys of the ground fought over ; he sought information from participants in the campaign, French, Belgian, English, and Prussian ; and, as the result of all this laborious examination, he published, in 1857, a work which was instantly recognised as authoritative, which cleared up much that was previously obscure and reversed many opinions that had previously been treated as settled, and which has never been controverted in any material respect. A reader who should confine himself to a single book upon Waterloo ought, beyond all question, to make choice of Charras's. Yet it is to be read with a certain caution. It was written expressly and avowedly for the disparagement of the military reputation of Napoleon. The writer does not—like Thiers, on the other side—suppress, pervert, falsify ; he writes honestly, and fortifies his assertions ; yet he is distinctly pleading a cause, and his reader must be continually on his guard. In another respect his representations must be received with allowance : he wrote, as it were, as the guest and under the auspices of the Belgian Government ; and he has requited this hospitality by softening, so far as extreme

ingenuity availed, the ignominious part which Belgium played in the war. One other respect in which the book differs from its predecessors is that the writer thoroughly realised that Napoleon, at the time of the Waterloo campaign, was in a state of health that incapacitated him from such exertions, physical or intellectual, as he had made in former wars. Charras has indeed perceived and said thus much; but he has not shown—perhaps it could not be shown except by evidence that has been produced since he wrote—that Napoleon's condition was of itself sufficient, apart from other causes, to bring about the miscarriage of his enterprise.

The other works here followed are sufficiently characterised in the notes upon the pages where they are cited, and it will be sufficient in this place to enumerate the titles of the more important in an order approximating to that of their relative usefulness and trustworthiness:—

Col. Charles C. Chesney—*Waterloo Lectures: a Study of the Campaign of 1815.*

General Sir J. Shaw Kennedy—*Notes on Waterloo.*

Captain William Siborne—*History of the War in France and Belgium in 1815.*

Lieutenant-Colonel Charras—*Histoire de la Campagne de 1815: Waterloo.*

Duke of Wellington—*Memorandum on General Clausewitz's Campaign of 1815.*

George Hooper—*Waterloo.*

Erekmann-Chatrian—*Waterloo.*

General Baron de Jomini—*Life of Napoleon.*

” ” ” —*Political and Military Summary of the Campaign of 1815.* (An elaboration of a chapter in the preceding.)

General Sir Edward Cust—*Annals of the Wars of the Nineteenth Century.*

Sir Archibald Alison—*History of Europe.*

Sir Walter Scott—*Life of Napoleon Buonaparte.*

” ” —*Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk.*

Capt. J. W. Pringle—*Remarks on the Campaign of 1815.*

(Printed as an Appendix to Scott's *Napoleon.*)

J. G. Lockhart—*Life of Napoleon.*

Adolphe Thiers—*History of the Consulate and the Empire.*

Rev. G. R. Gleig—*Story of the Battle of Waterloo.*

Rev. John S. C. Abbott—*History of Napoleon Bonaparte.*

William Hazlitt—*Life of Napoleon Bonaparte.*

Victor Hugo—A passage in *Les Misérables* on the Battle of Waterloo.

The recently published *Letters* of Metternich, Talleyrand, and Mme. de Rémusat add nothing to our knowledge of this campaign. Since this book was completed Mr. John C. Ropes has published in the *Atlantic Monthly* (June, 1881) an article entitled *Who Lost Waterloo?* in which he puts the blame of the defeat upon Grouchy, because his march to Wavre was conducted on the east of the river Dyle, “outside of” the Prussians; whereas, if he had crossed the river at Mousty early on the morning of June 18, and taken the interior line for his advance, thus interposing between the Prussians and the Grand Army, Napoleon might then have employed his whole force against Wellington's unsupported army, and have beaten it by 3 P.M. This course, says Mr. Ropes, would certainly have been taken by “Davoust, whom [Napoleon] might have had, and ought to have had, in Grouchy's place.” The documents given in the course of the following narrative, however, prove, as it seems to the writer, beyond room for doubt, that the false direction of the

march and its fatal consequences were chargeable solely to Napoleon, and to his unprecedented apathy about ascertaining the purposes of Blücher. Moreover, Mr. Ropes does not touch upon the consideration that Wellington would not have accepted battle except upon the absolute certainty of Blücher's co-operation. One very damaging fact, nevertheless, he seems to substantiate against Grouchy—his “wilful concealment” and “persistent denial,” during nearly thirty years, of an order in which Napoleon warned him against a possible union of Blücher with Wellington, and enjoined upon him the importance of preserving constant communication with headquarters.¹

Charras's warning of the importance of regarding the dates of this campaign may explain the prominence which has been given them throughout this work. He says :—

“We are obliged to enter into minute details, but it is an inconvenience inherent in the recital of this campaign, so short in its duration. Hours here had, so to say, an influence as great as days in other wars, and it is necessary to fix them with precision, to write with the watch on the table, to avoid being led astray by statements tending to mislead (*s'égarer à la suite des récits intéressés à l'inexactitude*).”

To secure the absolute precision in this respect, by the neglect of which so much error has been imported into the story of this campaign, the expedient has been adopted of stating not only the day, but, whenever possible, the hour of each incident so prominently that they cannot be overlooked and may readily be com-

¹ This suppressed order is inserted in its proper place in the narrative, page 148, note 88.

pared. When a date is no better than presumptive or conjectural, it is accompanied by a note of interrogation (?) ; when it has been in dispute, the justification of the one adopted is given in a footnote ; when stated without qualification, it is to be understood that, in the writer's opinion, there is no room for doubt respecting it.

There remains one further explanation of a peculiar arrangement adopted in the composition of this work. The text was designed to form as nearly as possible a continuous and chronological record of events ; at the same time, there was much in the nature of parenthesis, of explanation, of illustration, of anecdote, of controversy, that ought not to be excluded. Such matters have been treated in notes which—leaving the text complete in itself—furnish a repository for a miscellaneous store of Waterloo fact and fiction, some of it important, some trivial, but all, as it seemed to the compiler, having claim to attention. The advantage of an uninterrupted narrative must be his apology for the unusual array of footnotes.

D. G.

NEW YORK: *July*, 1881

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QUATRE BRAS, LIGNY, AND WATERLOO.

THOSE events of the earlier part of the Hundred Days¹ which are essential as an introduction to the campaign of Waterloo may be briefly summarized. Leaving Elba—which for nearly ten months had been his place of exile—at the end of the winter of 1815, Napoleon landed on the coast of France on the first day of spring, prepared to reclaim his forfeited throne.² His advance toward the capital, unpromising in some of its earlier incidents, soon became a triumphal progress; one after another of those sent to turn back his invasion joined his standard—chief among them Marshal Ney, with whose defection the Bourbons lost all hope of support by any part of the army;—Louis XVIII fled as he drew near, betaking himself first to Lille, and then establishing his court at Ghent; and Napoleon, having gained back his Empire without shedding a drop of blood, re-entered the Tuileries amid the rapturous applause of his adherents. The restored Emperor lost no time in applying himself to the settlement of his government, and

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Feb. 26,
1815.
March 1.

March 14.
March 19.

March 20.

¹ "The Hundred Days" are computed from March 13, 1815, when Napoleon assumed the government, to June 22, the day of his second abdication.

² Napoleon's entire following, when he disembarked at Cannes,

consisted of 500 grenadiers of his Guard, 200 dragoons, and 100 Polish lancers—all of whom were soldiers of the old Grand Army who had followed him to Elba. The cavalry were unmounted, and carried their saddles on their backs.

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tory.

particularly to the execution of four imperative tasks— (1) the establishment of his power in France itself; (2) the creation of armies and the material of war; (3) the adjustment of the national finances; and (4) the organization of the diplomatic relations and civil administration of the government.

(1) In the assertion of his power at home Napoleon lost no time. Royalist uprisings were on foot in southern France even before he had reached Paris, and quickly overspread Guienne, Languedoc, Provence, and Bordeaux. But Imperial troops were promptly dispatched from Lyons, with instructions to “put an end to the civil war at whatever cost;” and so energetically were these carried out that, on April 29th, a salute of 100 guns from all the fortresses of France announced that the Imperial authority was everywhere established. Almost instantly, however (May 1st), the Marquis de la Rochejaquelein made a descent upon the coast of La Vendée, and aroused so general an insurrection among the peasantry that his followers soon numbered 20,000 armed men; and the prolonged struggle which ensued, though ultimately abortive, served to retain in the west the 17,000 French veterans sent to quell it, and lessened by so much the Emperor’s strength at Waterloo.

(2) The military force of France had gone almost to pieces under the Bourbons. The arsenals had been emptied by the drains of previous campaigns and the abstractions of the invading armies; the fortresses along the exposed eastern frontier had been stripped by the Allies, who took 12,000 pieces of cannon from 53 fortresses; and equipments of every kind were wanting for the army. At once double forces of workmen were employed at all the manufactories of arms, and 20,000 muskets a month were thus produced, while this inadequate supply was increased by establishing bodies of

workmen at different points, and by calling in the old arms, repairing, and re-issuing them ; all foundries were engaged in casting guns ; horses were bought at all the fairs and from the peasants ; every commune was called upon to furnish its proportion of the clothing and uniforms for a battalion ; and by the end of May equipments were provided for 220,000 troops. As to the army itself, Napoleon found at the end of March only 100,000 troops of the line, and these "re-organized" by the Bourbons upon a pre-Revolutionary model. His first step was to re-form the old regiments, to give them back the old numbers and the eagles which spoke of their past glories, and to recall to their standards by proclamation the veterans who had been pensioned or discharged under the Restoration. At the same time he ordered the formation of the 3d, 4th, and 5th battalions of every old regiment of infantry and of the 4th and 5th squadrons of every regiment of cavalry, of 30 new battalions of artillery, 10 of waggon-train, 20 regiments of the Young Guard, and 20 of marines ; and, by the reorganization of the National Guard and other measures, he arranged to have by October 1st an effective force of 800,000 men, and counted on having ultimately an armed establishment numbering, of all kinds, 2,500,000. The actually effective field forces on June 1st were about 200,000.³

(3) The financial difficulties which confronted Napoleon seemed little short of insurmountable, and might

³ The strength with which Napoleon entered upon the Waterloo campaign has usually been stated at higher numbers than 200,000. Si-borne, for instance, gives it as 217,000. But Col. Chesney, in his *Waterloo Lectures*, after examining Charras's scrutiny of the War Bureau records at Paris, sets it at

198,000. It may be observed in general that quotations of figures in this narrative, when not otherwise accounted for, are taken from Si-borne, corrected by Chesney or Charras when occasion requires. The distribution of the troops above referred to will be found in note 6, page 9.

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tory.

have proved wholly so, had the Empire been given a new lease of life. The economies of Louis XVIII had left some 40,000,000 francs in the treasury, with nearly as much to come in from bills about to mature for the sale of national wood ; but the first six weeks' expenditures of the Imperial government served to exhaust the cash in hand, though it was husbanded by getting supplies by military requisition, when possible, or by paying with orders on the treasury at distant dates—a procedure which ultimately brought no small trouble to the restored Bourbons. For present needs, it proved that arrears of taxes were almost irrecoverable, and that capitalists—who, with all people of substance, had no faith in the stability of the Empire—declined to make advances on any terms. In this exigency, the sinking-fund—which had remained intact through all previous emergencies, and which yielded 4,000,000 francs per annum—was sold after much solicitation to an unwilling association of bankers for 31,000,000 francs in ready money ; bills about to fall due were discounted at rates as high as 18 per cent., and the revenues of future years forestalled in various ways : so that during April and May 80,000,000 francs were raised. This sufficed to meet the unavoidable needs of the Empire until it went down in the crash of Waterloo.

(4) Napoleon's efforts to establish diplomatic relations with the Powers of Europe were—as, indeed, he foresaw must be the case—wholly unproductive. Their determination to suppress him had been proclaimed before he remounted his throne. When the news of his departure from Elba reached Vienna, there was still in session there that Congress of the Allied Powers which had originally assembled to readjust the affairs of Europe, left in a chaotic state on the downfall of the Empire ; and its meetings had been prolonged by the

March 7.

dissensions among the Powers themselves and their jealousies respecting the territories to be partitioned among them,—insomuch that the peacemakers seemed not unlikely to go to war with one another, and still retained on foot armies aggregating nearly a million of men. At first the representatives at Vienna were in doubt as to Napoleon's probable movements, and imagined that he would betake himself to Naples, where his brother-in-law Murat was making ready for war. But soon they received intelligence that he had landed in France, that troops had joined him, that he was moving toward Paris; and then it was clear that he aimed at nothing less than resuming the sovereignty of France. The Vienna plenipotentiaries quickly indicated the intentions of their governments by issuing the following declaration of outlawry :

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March 9.

March 13.

“The Powers which signed the Treaty of Paris, re-assembled in Congress at Vienna, informed of the escape of Napoleon Bonaparte and of his entry with an armed force into France, owe it to their own dignity and to the interest of nations to make a solemn announcement of their sentiments on the occasion. By thus breaking the convention which had established him in the island of Elba, Bonaparte has destroyed the sole legal title on which his existence depended; and by appearing again in France with projects of confusion and disorder, he has deprived himself of the protection of the laws, and has manifested to the universe that there can be neither peace nor truce with him. The Powers consequently declare that Napoleon Bonaparte has placed himself without the pale of civil and social relations, and that, as an enemy and disturber of the tranquillity of the world, he is abandoned to public vengeance. They declare at the same time that, firmly resolved to maintain entire the Treaty of Paris of the 30th of May, 1814, and the dispositions sanctioned by that treaty, they will employ all the means at their disposal to secure the preservation of general peace, the object of all their efforts; and, although firmly persuaded that the whole of France will combine to crush this last

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mad attempt of criminal ambition, yet, if it should prove otherwise, they declare that they are ready to unite all their efforts, and exert all the powers at their disposal, to give the King of France all necessary assistance, and make common cause against all those who shall compromise the public tranquillity. . . . — [Signed] METTERNICH, TALLEYRAND, WELLINGTON, HARDENBERG, NESSELRODE, LÖWENHEIM."

March 25.

In the spirit of this declaration, moreover, a Treaty of Alliance was presently concluded, by which Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Great Britain engaged to unite their forces against Napoleon; to furnish 180,000 men each for the prosecution of the war, of which at least one-tenth was to be cavalry, with a fair proportion of artillery; and, if necessary, to draw forth their entire military forces.⁴ Inasmuch as the Continental Powers

⁴ Accompanying these measures of the sovereigns was a popular uprising throughout Europe, of which Charras gives this picture:—"Germany was seized with enthusiasm and with fury as in 1813. The desks of the church and of the university were changed anew into tribunes whence there resounded every instant the appeal to arms for the safety of the country. The professors again quitted their robes for uniforms. Their pupils resumed the musket. The songs of Arndt, of Körner, the popular Tyrtæuses of Germany, once more awakened the echoes of town and country. Journals, pamphlets, proclamations thickened, and succeeded one another without intermission, exciting memories of injuries endured, of blood shed, of fortunes ruined, kindling all the brands of hatred, launching menace and insult, not only against Napoleon, but also, alas! against France.—There were the exactions of Berlin and Hamburg, the exces-

sive and endless requisitions, the contingents devoured by the war; there was the grand iniquity of the Continental blockade, imposed and maintained by Napoleon against the stranger but violated by himself, for his own profit, along the boundaries of the Empire; there were Rome, Holland, Oldenburg, the Hanseatic towns, etc., incorporated with France, in time of peace, in despite of treaties; there were the violations of neutrality, the assassination of Vincennes, the ambush of Bayonne, the invasion of Spain, the peoples given in appanage to the brothers, the sisters, the lieutenants of Napoleon; there were also the evils inseparable from every war which were invoked to arouse the nations against him who had sought, who again sought, the monarchy of Europe, and against the French people—his accomplice, they said.—This unanimity had never before existed. . . . The strife was at hand, imminent. Europe was engaging her whole power; it was

were utterly bankrupt, Great Britain undertook to enable them to put their armies in motion by advancing them subsidies exceeding £11,000,000.⁵ Within six months at the latest, the Allies calculated forces amounting, after all reasonable deductions, to 600,000 men could be brought to invade France from every side, and once again to concentrate under the walls of Paris. = With the Allies in this warlike temper, all Napoleon's efforts to negotiate with them were in vain. His circular letter to the sovereigns—which began in the usual style, "Sir, my brother," and professed an earnest desire for peace—received no answer; all Caulaincourt's diplomatic overtures were similarly ignored, and his bearers of dispatches arrested or turned back; and at last he was confidentially informed that it was useless to try to make the Allies depart from their determination. Napoleon, therefore, made ready to repel the attack which it had proved impossible to avert, and resolved to do this by falling in the first instance upon the troops which the Allies had assembled in Belgium.⁶

April 1.

necessary, therefore, that the chief of the Empire, so suddenly restored, should lose not a day, not an hour, in preparing the national defence. Days were months, months years, at this terrible epoch. He needed courage instantly to proclaim the supreme gravity of his circumstances, to ap-

peal solemnly to France, to her whole energy, in the name of her imperilled independence."

⁵ The full text of the Treaty is given by Siborne. The subsidies, which England undertook to pay in monthly instalments, are thus enumerated by Alison:—

Austria . . .	£1,796,220	Portugal . .	£100,000	Minor Powers .	£1,724,000
Russia . . .	3,241,919	Sweden . .	521,061	Miscellaneous .	837,134
Prussia . . .	2,382,823	Italy and			
Hanover . .	206,590	Nether-			
Spain . . .	147,333	lands . .	78,152	In all . . .	£11,035,232

Portugal and Sweden, however—alone among the states of Europe,—refused to furnish any contingents.

⁶ Brialmont summarizes in the

following terms the Allies' plan of military operations:—"Schwarzenberg was about to pass the Rhine in two columns—the right at Mannheim

In the arrangement of his civil affairs Napoleon had found difficulties only less than in his foreign relations.

and Gernersheim, the left at Basle and Rheinfelden. The one was to move upon Châlons by Marne, the other by St. Dizier. The right column was to connect itself with the Prussian army, which had orders to pass the Sarre above the point where Schwartzemberg passed it, the Moselle between Thionville and Metz, the Meuse near to Verdun. The points of direction for the Russians were Chalons-sur-Marne and Rheims. Kleist's corps was to observe and attack the forts of the Meuse in the direction of Sedan. Finally, Wellington and Blücher

were to regulate their movements according to the progress of the Russians and the Austrians, and to take the road toward Laon, debouching by Maubeuge and Auvergne. As to the Austro-Sardinians, they were instructed to march upon Lyons, to ascend for a while the course of the Loire, and to fall in upon the left of Schwartzemberg." The operations actually accomplished by these several Allied forces are summarized by Siborne in the *Supplement* to his *History of the War in France and Belgium*. Their respective strength was as follows:—

Anglo-Allied Army,	under Wellington . . .	105,950
Prussian Army	„ Blücher . . .	116,897
German Corps d'Armée	„ Kleist . . .	26,200
Army of the Upper Rhine	„ Schwartzemberg . .	254,492
Russian Army	„ Barclay de Tolly . .	167,950
Army of Italy	„ Frimont . . .	60,000
Total Allied Armies in the field, June, 1815		<u>731,489</u>

Napoleon's possible lines of action under these circumstances are thus enumerated by Brialmont:—"First, he might negotiate, though that proceeding offered no chance of success. [Its failure has already been detailed in the text.] . . . Second, he might remain upon the defensive, and accept the attack of the Allies near Paris and Lyons. But this would be to deliver over half of France to the enemy, to throw the populace into consternation, and discourage the troops. Third, he might advance against the Anglo-Prussians, and beat them before the other contingents could come up. But this was to precipitate the war, while as yet no army had been brought together

strong enough to maintain the contest with fair chances of success. This latter inconvenience, however, appeared less serious than the others. At all events, the Emperor suffered himself to be carried away by one urgent consideration:—"The plan of anticipating the Anglo-Prussians," said he, "was alone in conformity with the genius of the nation, and with the spirit and principles of the war in which he was engaged; and it would get rid of the fearful inconvenience which attached to the second project, viz., the abandonment of Flanders, Picardy, Alsace, Lorraine, Champagne, Burgundy, Franche-Comté, Dauphiné, without firing a shot." According to Charras, Napo-

Enthusiastic as his partizans appeared at his return, few of them were willing to accept the dangerous honour of holding office under him ; and it was with great difficulty that he overcame the reluctance of the eight men who formed his cabinet—Cambacérès, Davoust, Caulaincourt, Fouché, Carnot, Gaudin, Mollière, and Decrès :—while he could only officer the interior departments of government by appointing persons previously discarded in disgrace or whose mutual jealousies and sympathies

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leon made a serious modification in his original plan. " While he summoned the corps of Gérard from the frontier of the Moselle to that on the North," says Charras, " he left the corps of Rapp in Alsace, and thus voluntarily deprived himself of a force of above 20,000 men, who would be powerless where he left them, but who, if led into Belgium, would have weighed heavily in the balance of war. He falsified this principle so justly laid down, so often and so happily applied, by himself—to concentrate his forces upon the principal point, and not to endeavour to have them everywhere, at the cost

of being powerful nowhere. A grave fault, which he was about, but too late, to attempt to correct!" = Of the troops with which Napoleon purposed operating, only the Grand Army, which he led in person, was in an effective condition when he was obliged to take the field. The other corps were but the nuclei of future armies, for which recruiting was going on in the interior. The position of each of these, together with their strength in the beginning of June and as it would have become a few weeks later, was as follows :—

	Commander	Headquarters	Strength in June	Prospective strength
Grand Army	Napoleon	—	122,401	—
Army of the Rhine	Rapp	Strasburg	36,000	—
" " Alps	Suchet	Grenoble	15,000	40,000
" " Jura	Lecourbe	Altkirch	4,500	18,000
" " Var	Brune	Marseilles	5,300	17,000
" " Eastern Pyrenees . .	Decaen	Perpignan	3,000	23,000
" " Western Pyrenees . .	Clauzel	Bordeaux	3,000	23,000
" " La Vendée	Lamarque	—	17,000	—

The Armies of the Rhine and the Alps, here mentioned, were to be increased by above 200,000 men, and to form the second line and support of the Grand Army in Napoleon's

further operations. In all, Napoleon had in the field, in the middle of June, but 206,200 men, to oppose to the 731,489 whom the Allies had then in arms.

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with conflicting factions disposed them to serve him only so far as was conducive to their own ulterior designs. Through such instrumentalities he had to reconcile, as best he might, the discordant parties which distracted France, to establish a representative constitution, and to organize the legislative body. Scarcely had the decree

April 30.

been issued, providing for the election of deputies to the Chamber of Representatives, when it appeared that the substantial citizens declined to take any part in the contest, and the deputies returned were for the most part political adventurers, demagogues, and enthusiasts, little better in the aggregate than those who held sway during the Revolution, and many of them the creatures of Fouché.

June 4.

At the meeting of the Chamber for organization it became evident not merely that there was a strong opposition, but that it existed with the connivance of some of the ministers themselves. Subsequent sessions disclosed a set determination on the part of the deputies to magnify their own functions as the representatives of the people, to thwart the Imperial authority at every step, to make even matters of military policy subservient to their views—in short, to render themselves, if opportunity served, the supreme source of power; and this disposition on the part of the legislature was accompanied by such processions and other demonstrations by the mob of Paris as to awaken fears that the Revolutionary excesses were to come again. Such was the state of things in his capital when, on the eve of his departure for the army, Napoleon delivered his farewell address to the Chambers. In moderate yet earnest terms he adjured them to preserve harmony in their counsels and a single regard to the welfare of the state.

June 11.

“The crisis in which we are engaged,” said he, “is a terrible one: let us not imitate the Greeks, who, pressed on all sides by barbarians, made themselves the mock of

posterity by engaging in abstract discussions at the moment the battering-ram was thundering at their gates.”⁷
 =He then ended his twelve weeks of administrative labour by appointing a provisional government, under the presidency of his brother Joseph, and, after a night spent in the cabinet, left Paris at daybreak. In two days he was at his headquarters with the Grand Army at Beaumont, and issuing the orders for the advance on the morrow which was to open the campaign of Waterloo.

Introductory.

June 12,
 4 A.M.
 June 14.

The armies of the Allies which Napoleon was about to attack occupied all southern Belgium, and guarded the whole French frontier from the Forest of Ardennes on the east to the seaports on the North Sea. It had so happened, as an outgrowth of the doings of the Congress at Vienna, that, at the time of Napoleon's return from Elba, both British and Prussian troops were in that region—the English to occupy the frontier fortresses of the newly created Kingdom of the Netherlands until it could be fairly organized, and to prevent any disorders arising from the strong Gallican sympathies of the Flemings and their hatred of the union with Holland which had been forced upon them; while Prussia had kept a corps of 30,000 men under Gen. Kleist in her

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⁷ “Bitter words,” is Charras's characterization of Napoleon's parting address to the Chambers, “but not without grandeur.” His embarrassments from these legislative obstructions influenced the military plans which have been referred to in note 6, page 8. Jomini, in his *Life of Napoleon*, puts into the Emperor's mouth this determining motive for an offensive campaign:—“If there had been no political factions in France, and the entire nation had

been ready to rally round its chief and conquer with him, it would have been better to await the enemy at the foot of Montmartre. But when interests and opinions were divided and political passions ran high, and a factious legislative body was exciting divisions and animosities in the capital, it would have been dangerous there to await an invasion. A victory beyond the frontiers would procure me time and silence my political enemies in the interior.”

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just acquired provinces along the lower Rhine.⁸ Wellington lost no time in hastening to the seat of the



[April 4.] coming war and making his headquarters at Brussels ;
[April 17.] and Blücher, following him, presented himself a fortnight later at Liège, and established headquarters at Namur.

⁸ The partitions of territory made by the Congress of Vienna had given rise to such jealousies and threatenings of war among the contracting parties that, except France, all the Powers had retained their armies upon a war footing. Among the unfortunate new creations was this Kingdom of the Netherlands, consisting of Holland and Belgium, of which Prince Frederick William of Nassau had just been made King (March 23, 1815), and of which England had constituted herself a kind of guardian and protector, until it should attain years of maturity—(which, in fact, it never did, since

the Flemings only endured the Dutch yoke until they were able to assert their independence in the Revolution of 1830, when England had again to take the leading part in creating the Kingdom of Belgium and furnishing it with a King in the person of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, widower of the Princess Charlotte, June, 1831). In the spring of 1815 the Belgian fortresses were held by some 12,000 British troops, upon which, as a nucleus, the new King of the Netherlands was forming an army of his own—the entire force being under the command of the heir apparent, the Prince of

From the direction of their respective bases of supply it naturally resulted that the Prussians took position along the easternmost portion of the line to be guarded, the English toward the sea coast; and thus the point of junction between the extreme right of the Prussian army and the English left fell nearly where the frontier was crossed by the great highway from northern France to Brussels, along which Napoleon designed his advance upon that capital. In other words, Blücher—assuming, and correctly, that Napoleon would never attempt the passage of the rugged country of the Ardennes—watched the frontier from the western limits of the forest and the River Meuse as far west as Binche, between Charleroi and Mons; and the line of observation thence to the sea was taken up by Wellington. The territory thus occupied by the two armies was 100 miles from east to west and 40 from south to north, and the duties of both were fourfold—(1) Each must preserve, at its outermost wing, communication with its own country and base of supplies; (2) the inner wings must communicate with one another, both for mutual support and in order to preserve unbroken the long line of supplies which England was affording to the armies throughout Eastern Europe; (3) each army must be so posted as to be able to concentrate expeditiously at any menaced point of invasion; and (4) close watch was to be kept along the whole line of every approach by which the invader might come.⁹ Within the length

Preparations for the Campaign.

Orange. The Prince, however, placed himself under the orders of the Duke of Wellington, who had left Vienna (March 29), where he was serving as England's representative in the Congress, as soon as possible after learning of Napoleon's return, and travelled at such speed as to over-

take his own messenger, reaching Brussels on April 4. Here he remained, urging upon the English government the necessary war preparations and making dispositions for the coming struggle.

⁹ The necessity of this laborious watchfulness arose from the defen-

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of the frontier several roads led from France to Brussels ; and Napoleon, screening his movements behind the strong line of frontier fortresses held by the French, might emerge suddenly upon any one of these. Wellington had reasons for apprehending that the French would strike first at his right flank—for, beside having on his hands the care both of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and of the fugitive Bourbon court at Ghent, he held it of prime importance to preserve Ostend and the communication with England by which his men and munitions were arriving ;—and he therefore strengthened the field works in that part of his line, and quartered in that direction a considerable proportion of the troops which were ultimately needed on his extreme left. But he did not on that account neglect precautions for concentrating rapidly elsewhere. At the central point of Brussels, his headquarters, the Duke held a heavy re-

sive policy to which Wellington and Blücher were constrained by the agreement among the Allies, that no forward movement should be made until the great masses of troops, now widely scattered throughout Europe, could be assembled at connecting points along the French frontier and combined in a concentric movement, in overwhelming numbers, upon Paris. Wellington, on first taking command, entertained ideas of assuming the offensive ; and, as soon as Austria had destroyed Murat in Italy, he wrote to Schwartzberg (June 2), urging the immediate advance of the Army of the Upper Rhine, and saying that he was ready, and Blücher eager, to begin hostilities. Before there was time to act on this Napoleon made his attack.—The Prussian writers on the campaign have stated that Blücher and Wel-

lington had arranged to invade France on July 1st. Charras quotes this assertion by Wagner and Damitz, to contradict it by letters from Wellington to Schwartzberg (May 9, June 2) and to the Czar Alexander (June 15). "Before commencing operations in the North," Charras says, "Wellington and Blücher were to wait until the Russian, Austrian, and other armies were advanced to such a point in French territory, that the Anglo-Prussians could support and be supported by them. Now, the Russians and Austrians were not to commence hostilities until July 1st." War, it is to be remembered, had not been declared ; and the commanders in Belgium had received "absolute instructions to respect the French frontier until the signal for hostilities should be given by the sovereigns."

serve under his own command, while the advanced corps of his army could be reached by roads radiating thence to their interior points of communication—Oudenarde, Grammont, Ath, Enghien, Soignies, Nivelles, and Quatre Bras;—so that, by advancing with his reserve to whichever of these might be attacked, and putting his other troops in movement, he could assemble two-thirds of his entire disposable force within 22 hours at the point threatened by the enemy. In like manner, Blücher—with his headquarters at Namur, and the points of concentration for his corps at Fleurus, Namur, Ciney, and Liège—could concentrate each corps at its own headquarters within 12 hours, or his whole army upon any one of them within 24 hours. To concentrate the English army on its left and the Prussian on its right, that is at their point of junction, would of course require a longer time than to assemble either at any point within its own line—a feature which no doubt influenced Napoleon's plan of the campaign. Beyond these general provisions, the commanders had drawn up in advance specific instructions for the management of each detachment of troops in the event of every movement of the enemy that could be foreseen. For instance, more than a month before the invasion took place, the commander of the Prussian corps stationed at the junction of the two armies had issued orders to his brigade officers how to meet the very attack which afterwards was made upon them in the first advance of the French. It had moreover been agreed between Wellington and Blücher that a battle was likely to be fought about the ground of Quatre Bras or Ligny, and decided that in case of necessity they should fall back and reunite before the Forest of Soignies; and accordingly the field of Waterloo was mapped out by English officers a week before the invasion, and the map was used by the Duke

[May 2.]

[June 8.]

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the day before the battle to designate the positions the brigades and regiments should hold on the morrow. Confident in the thoroughness of their dispositions and of the vigilance of the outposts that watched for the enemy's movement, the Allied commanders determined to make no premature change in their arrangements until the French mode of attack should be thoroughly developed—a policy which, at the time, was attributed to their being taken by surprise.

The two armies of the Allies were very differently constituted. Prussia had on foot at the time war became imminent a standing army, complete in all arms, and near at hand, of which it was only necessary to move forward such a part as was needed to support Kleist's corps already on the ground. The troops of which Blücher thus found himself at the head varied in quality. Nearly half, both infantry and cavalry, were Landwehr hastily trained under the new system which Scharnhorst had devised when Germany rose against French domination; and the regular troops comprised a large proportion of recruits who filled the great gaps made by the campaigns of Germany and France in the ranks of the patriot volunteers of 1813. But all were of one race and one tongue and under the same discipline; and all burned to avenge the wrongs their country had endured from the French; all, moreover, had enthusiastic admiration for their leader and confidence in him. = Wellington, on the contrary, had been forced to improvise a fortuitous collection of nondescript organizations that formed, when assembled, what he went so far as to call "a villainous army." Before leaving Vienna to take command, he had written to Lord Castlereagh, urging him to reinforce the army in the Netherlands as much as possible, especially in cavalry and artillery. On reaching Brussels, he wrote

[March
26.]

[April 6.]

again, describing the preparations as most unsatisfactory,—for the troops of the new Kingdom of the Netherlands were raw levies, wholly inefficient, while the Belgian portion of them were evidently disaffected, and the British infantry sent him consisted largely of recruits hastily raised or second battalions collected from garrisons, his own Peninsular veterans having been for the most part shipped off to America.¹⁰ “It appears to me,” wrote the Duke confidentially, “that you

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¹⁰ Some notion of the character of a portion of the British troops is conveyed in the Earl of Albemarle's *Fifty Years of my Life*. At the time he received his commission as ensign in the 14th regiment, in April, 1815, the autobiographer tells us, “I still wanted two months of sixteen.” This lad at once went to Belgium and to his regiment, which had no fewer than 16 ensigns. “The 3d battalion of the 14th Foot, which I now joined,” he says, “was one which in ordinary times would not have been considered fit to be sent on foreign service at all, much less against an enemy in the field. Fourteen of the officers and 300 of the men were under twenty years of age. These last, consisting principally of Buckinghamshire lads fresh from the plough, were called at home ‘the Bucks,’ but their *un-buckish* appearance procured for them the appellation of ‘the Peasants.’” On reaching Brussels, the Ensign relates, the battalion was “inspected by an old General of the name of Mackenzie, who no sooner set eyes on the corps than he called out, ‘Well, I never saw such a set of boys, both officers and men.’ . . . The General could not reconcile it to his conscience to declare the raw striplings

fit for active service, and ordered the Colonel to march them off the ground, and to join a brigade then about to proceed to garrison Antwerp. Tidy [the Colonel commanding] would not budge a step. Lord Hill happening to pass by, our colonel called out, ‘My lord, were you satisfied with the behaviour of the 14th at Corunna?’ ‘Of course I was; but why ask the question?’ ‘Because I am sure your lordship will save this fine regiment from the disgrace of garrison duty.’ Lord Hill went to the Duke, who had arrived that same day at Brussels, and brought him to the window. The regiment was afterwards inspected by his Grace and their sentence reversed. In the meanwhile a priggish staff officer, who knew nothing of the countermand, said to Tidy in mincing tones, ‘Sir, your brigade is waiting for you. Be pleased to march off your men.’ ‘Ay, ay, sir,’ was the rough reply, and, with a look of defiance, my colonel gave the significant word of command, ‘14th, TO THE FRONT! Quick march.’ From henceforth our regiment formed part of Lord Hill's corps.” This body of raw striplings will be heard of, later, as doing good service at Waterloo.

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have not taken a clear view of your situation. . . . How we are to make out 150,000 men, or even the 60,000 of the defensive part of the Treaty of Chaumont, appears not to have been considered. If you could let me have 40,000 good British infantry, besides those you insist upon having in garrisons, the proportions settled by treaty that you are to furnish of cavalry, that is to say the eighth of 150,000, including in both the old German Legion, and 150 pieces of British field-artillery fully horsed, I should be satisfied and take my chance for the rest. . . . As it is, we are in a bad way."

[April 21.] A fortnight later he complained that, instead of 150 pieces of artillery, he had but 84, of which only 42 were British, and that even for these, though he was authorized to buy horses in Belgium, the government furnished no drivers, whom he must supply from the infantry, which could by no means afford to spare them.¹¹ Perhaps it was for this reason that he never

¹¹ The solicitude here expressed by the Duke about his artillery deserves note, both because of the under-estimate of its importance which has been attributed to him, and of the sufferings which befell his army at Quatre Bras and at Waterloo from the French ascendancy in that arm. = Some illustrations of the experience of the artillery and of the curious army management which prevailed under Wellington's command, are recorded in the *Journal of the Waterloo Campaign* which was kept from day to day by the English Captain (afterwards General) Cavalié Mercer, who commanded one of the 6-horse batteries attached to the cavalry corps. His battery was shipped in April at Harwich, and reached Ostend to find that no means had been provided for trans-

porting them to the shore. The English naval officer of the port said that the Duke's orders were peremptory to land the troops without delay, and send the ships back for more; so he ordered the sailors to throw horses, saddlery, and harness into the sea, whence the gunners fished out at low tide what they could secure, and caught the horses, which had gone off in search of forage; and there the troop was left unfed and unsheltered through a stormy night on a strange sea-coast, because no one would take the responsibility of directing them whither to go. Captain Mercer, however, got his troop again into its originally fine condition, and in one of the inspections of the troops which the two commanders-in-chief used to make, it attracted their attention.

brought up from Antwerp three batteries of 18-pounders, "guns of position," which were sorely needed at La Haye Sainte. About his staff also the government gave him equal annoyance, appointing, in the stead of the officers whom he had himself educated in the Peninsula, novices who were pushed forward by family influence. Complaining that certain aids had not been sent him whose assistance he had desired, he wrote: "It is quite impossible for me to superintend the details of the duties of these departments myself, having already more to arrange than I am equal to; and I cannot intrust them to the young gentlemen of the staff of this army. Indeed, I must say, I do not know how to employ them."¹² The same redundancy of staff officers pre-

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[April 29.]

"Instead of proceeding straight through the ranks, as they had done everywhere else," says Mercer, "each subdivision—nay, each individual horse—was closely scrutinised, Blücher repeating continually that he had never seen anything so superb in his life, and concluded by exclaiming, 'Mein Gott, dere is not von orse in dies batterie vich is not goot for Veldt Marshal!' and Wellington agreed with him. However," adds Mercer, "except asking Sir George Wood whose troop it was, his Grace never even bestowed a regard upon me as I followed from subdivision to subdivision." One more incident from Mercer will serve to illustrate at once the Duke's irrational prejudice against all innovation and the effectual means he took of repelling that personal affection which both Blücher and Napoleon won from their officers and men:—"Captain Whinyates having joined the army with the rocket troop, the Duke, who looked upon rockets as nonsense, ordered that they should be put into

store, and the troops supplied with guns instead. Colonel Sir G. Wood, instigated by Whinyates, called on the Duke to ask permission to leave him his rockets as well as guns. A refusal. Sir George, however, seeing the Duke was in a particularly good humour, ventured to say, 'It will break poor Whinyates' heart to lose his rockets.' 'Damn his heart, sir! let my orders be obeyed,' was the answer thundered in his ear by the Duke, as he turned on the worthy Sir George." In some way not recorded, a compromise must have been effected, for Sir Augustus Frazer, commander of the British horse-artillery, wrote, in a letter dated Brussels, May 5: "Major Whinyates' rocket troop has received guns instead of the arm *à la Congrève*, of which it retains 800." This residue, as will be seen in the sequel, did good service at Waterloo.

¹² A little later, the Duke wrote (May 8) to the same effect to Lord Stewart:—"I have got an infamous army, very weak and ill-equipped;

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vailed even more unfortunately among the troops of the several Continental states represented in Wellington's motley array—Hanoverians, Brunswickers, Nassauers, Dutch-Belgians,—each of which insisted upon maintaining its own regimental organization and serving only under its own officers, while the tactics of each differed from those of the others. Thus the Duke led in reality no compact army, but a coalition of heterogeneous forces. One-third only of these were British, of whom many now saw their first campaign; the King's German Legion were hardened Peninsular veterans; and the Brunswickers, led by their Duke, were expected to acquit themselves well; but the remainder consisted of recruits not fitted for the field, and of the Nassau and Dutch-Belgian troops, in whose fidelity to the Allied cause no confidence could be placed. Such was the composition of what Wellington terms “the worst army ever brought together;” yet it contained regiments and brigades of which he wrote, after Waterloo, ‘I never saw the British infantry behave so well.’

The strength of the three armies, in their several arms, at the opening of the campaign, was as follows:—¹³

	Anglo-Allied Army	Prussians	Total Allies	French
Infantry . . .	82,062	99,715	181,777	84,235
Cavalry . . .	14,482	11,879	26,361	21,665
Artillery . . .	8,166	5,303	13,469	10,901
Engineers, train, etc. .	1,240	—	1,240	5,600
Total . . .	105,950	116,897	222,847	122,401
Guns	196	312	508	350

and a very inexperienced staff. In my opinion they are doing nothing in England. They have not raised a man; they have not called out the militia either in England or Ireland; are unable to send me anything; and

they have not sent a message to Parliament about the money. The war spirit has therefore evaporated, as I am informed.”

¹³ The following details of the effective strength and composition of

The force which Napoleon led was composed of the flower of the French army. One-third of it was made

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paign.

each of the three armies are taken from Siborne's *History of the War in France and Belgium in 1815*, Appendixes VI, VIII, and IX. The lists

of the corps and their commanders will serve for reference during the remainder of the narrative.

ANGLO-ALLIED ARMY.

FIELD MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

1ST CORPS—THE PRINCE OF ORANGE.

				Men
<i>1st Division</i> —Maj. Gen. Cooke				
1st British Brigade	Maj. Gen. Maitland	1,997	} 4,061	
2d " "	Maj. Gen. Sir John Byng	2,064		
Artillery	Lt. Col. Adye			
<i>3d Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Count Alten				
5th British Brigade	Maj. Gen. Sir Colin Halkett	2,254	} 6,970	
2d Brigade King's German Legion	Col. von Ompteda	1,527		
1st Hanoverian Brigade	Maj. Gen. Count Kielmansegge	3,189		
Artillery	Lt. Col. Williamson			
<i>2d Dutch-Belgian Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Baron de Perponcher				
1st Brigade	Maj. Gen. Count de Bylandt	3,233	} 7,533	
2d " "	H.S.H. Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar	4,300		
Artillery	Maj. von Opstal			
<i>3d Dutch-Belgian Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Baron Chassé				
1st Brigade	Maj. Gen. Ditmars	3,088	} 6,669	
2d " "	Maj. Gen. d'Aubremé	3,581		
Artillery	Maj. van der Smissen			
Total 1st Corps, guns 48, men				25,233

2D CORPS—LT. GEN. LORD HILL.

<i>2d Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Sir H. Clinton	
3d British Brigade . Maj. Gen. Adam . . . 2,625	6,833
1st Brigade King's Ger- man Legion . . . Col. du Plat . . . 1,758	
3d Hanoverian Brigade . Col. Hew Halkett . . . 2,454	
Artillery . . . Lt. Col. Gold	
<i>4th Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Sir Charles Colville	
4th British Brigade . Col. Mitchell . . . 1,767	7,212
6th „ „ . Maj. Gen. Johnstone . . . 2,396	
6th Hanoverian Brigade . Maj. Gen. Sir James Lyon . . . 3,049	
Artillery . . . Lt. Col. Hawker	
<i>1st Dutch-Belgian Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Stedmann	
1st Brigade . . . Maj. Gen. Hauw	6,389
2d „ . . . Maj. Gen. Berens	
Artillery	
Dutch-Belgian Indian Brigade . . . Lt. Gen. Anthing	3,583
Detachments, etc.	16
Total 2d Corps, guns 40, men	
	24,033

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up of what M. Thiers called "the novices of 1813 and 1814"—soldiers, that is, who had gone through the

RESERVE.

	Men
<i>5th Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Sir Thomas Picton	
8th British Brigade . Maj. Gen. Sir James Kempt . 2,471	7,158
9th " " . Maj. Gen. Sir Dennis Pack . 2,173	
5th Hanoverian Brigade Col. von Vincke . 2,514	
Artillery . . . Maj. Heisse	
<i>6th Division</i> —Lt. Gen. Hon. Sir L. Cole	
10th British Brigade . Maj. Gen. Sir John Lambert . 2,567	5,149
4th Hanoverian Brigade Col. Best . 2,582	
Artillery . . . Lt. Col. Bruckmann	
British Reserve Ar- tillery . . . Maj. Drummond	
<i>7th Division</i>	
7th British Brigade 1,216	
British Garrison troops 2,017	
<i>Brunswick Corps</i> —H.S.H. the Duke of Brunswick	
Advanced Guard . . Maj. von Rauschenplat . 672	5,376
Light Brigade . . Lt. Col. von Buttler . 2,688	
Line " . . Lt. Col. von Specht . 2,016	
Artillery . . . Maj. Mahn	
<i>Hanoverian Reserve Corps</i> —Lt. Gen. von der Decken	
1st Brigade . . Lt. Col. von Benningsen . . .	9,000
2d " . . Lt. Col. von Beaulieu . . .	
3d " . . Lt. Col. von Bodekin . . .	
4th " . . Lt. Col. von Wissel . . .	
<i>Nassau Contingent</i> —Gen. von Kruse 2,880	
Total Reserve, guns 64, men	32,796

CAVALRY—LT. GEN. THE EARL OF UXBRIDGE.

British and King's German Legion

1st (Household) Brigade	Maj. Gen. Lord E. Somerset	1,286	8,473
2d (Union) "	Maj. Gen. Sir W. Ponsonby	1,181	
3d Brigade . . .	Maj. Gen. Sir W. Dörnberg	1,268	
4th " . . .	Maj. Gen. Sir J. Vandeleur	1,171	
5th " . . .	Maj. Gen. Sir C. Grant	1,336	
6th " . . .	Maj. Gen. Sir H. Vivian	1,279	
7th " . . .	Col. Sir F. von. Arentsschildt	1,012	
6 British horse batteries attached to the Cavalry			

Hanoverian

1st Brigade . . .	Col. von Estorff . . . 1,682	2,604
Brunswick Cavalry 922	

Dutch-Belgian

1st Brigade . . .	Maj. Gen. Trip . . . 1,237	3,405
2d " . . .	Maj. Gen. de Chigney . . 1,086	
3d " . . .	Maj. Gen. van Merlen . . 1,082	
Artillery		

Total Cavalry, guns 44, men 14,482

tremendous campaigns of Germany and France,—while the two-thirds were veterans, for the most part returned from Russian and German prisons. Napoleon had commanded larger armies before, but never one of such

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ARTILLERY.

			Men	
<i>British</i>	10 foot batteries, guns	54	men 3,630	} 5,030
	8 horse	48	1,400	
<i>King's German Legion</i>	1 foot	6		} 526
	2 horse	12		
<i>Hanoverian</i>	2 foot	12		465
<i>Brunswick</i>	1	8		} 510
	1 horse	8		
<i>Dutch-Belgian</i>	4 foot	32	968	} 1,635
	2	16	667	

Total Artillery, guns 196, men 8,166

Engineers, Sappers and Miners, Waggon Train, Staff Corps 1,240

Grand total, guns 196, men 105,950

SUMMARY.

	Infantry	Cavalry	Artillery	Guns	Engineers etc.
British	23,543	5,913	5,030	102	1,240
King's German Legion	3,301	2,560	526	18	—
Hanoverian	22,788	1,682	465	12	—
Brunswick	5,376	922	510	16	—
Nassau	2,880	—	—	—	—
Dutch-Belgian	24,174	3,405	1,635	48	—
Total.	82,062	14,482	8,166	196	1,240

PRUSSIAN ARMY.

FIELD MARSHAL PRINCE BLÜCHER VON WAHLSTADT.

1ST CORPS—LT. GEN. VON ZIETEN

		Men	
1st Brigade	Gen. von Steinmetz	8,647	} 27,887
2d "	Gen. von Pirch II.	7,666	
3d "	Gen. von Jagow	6,853	
4th "	Gen. von Henkel	4,721	
Reserve Cavalry	Lt. Gen. von Röder		} 1,925
Brigade of	Gen. von Treskow		
" "	Lt. Col. Lützow		
Reserve Artillery	Col. von Lehmann		} 1,019
8 foot batteries			
1 howitzer "			
3 horse			

Total 1st Corps, guns

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supremely fine material. Fervently devoted to their Emperor, with the highest creed of military loyalty,

2D CORPS—GEN. VON PIRCH I.

		Men	
5th Brigade	Gen. von Tippelskirchen	6,851	25,836
6th „	Gen. von Krafft	6,469	
7th „	Gen. von Brause	6,224	
8th „	Col. von Langen	6,292	
Reserve Cavalry	Gen. von Jürgass		4,468
Brigade of	Col. von Thümen		
„ „	Col. Count Schulenburg		
„ „	Col. von Sohr		
Reserve Artillery	Col. von Röhl		1,454
7 foot batteries			
3 horse „			
Total 2d Corps, guns 80, men		31,758	

3D CORPS—LT. GEN. VON THIELMANN.

9th Brigade	Gen. von Borcke	6,752	} 20,611
10th „	Col. von Kämpfen	4,045	
11th „	Col. von Luck	3,634	
12th „	Col. von Stülpnagel	6,180	
Reserve Cavalry	Gen. von Hobe	} 2,405	
Brigade of	Col. von der Marwitz		
„ „	Col. Count Lottum		
Reserve Artillery	Col. von Mohnhaupt	} 964	
3 foot batteries		
3 horse „		
Total 3d Corps, guns 48, men		23,980	

4TH CORPS—GEN. COUNT BÜLOW VON DENNEWITZ.

13th Brigade Lt. Gen. von Hacke	6,385
14th " Gen. von Ryssel	6,953
15th " Gen. von Losthin	5,881
16th " Col. von Hiller	6,162
Reserve Cavalry Gen. Prince William of Prussia	3,081
Brigade of Gen. von Sydow	
" " Col. Count Schwerin	
" " Lt. Col. von Watzdorf	1,866
Reserve Artillery Lt. Col. von Bardeleben	
8 foot batteries	
3 horse "	1,866
Total 4th Corps, guns 88, men	
30,328	
Grand total, guns 312, men	
116,897	

SUMMARY.

	Infantry	Cavalry	Artillery	Guns
1st Corps d'Armée	27,817	1,925	1,019	96
2d " "	25,836	4,468	1,454	80
3d " "	20,611	2,405	964	48
4th " "	25,381	3,081	1,866	88
Total	99,715	11,879	5,303	312

filled with an absolutely infuriated hatred of their foes, and confident in their own invincibility, the Grand Army

Preparations for the Campaign.

FRENCH ARMY.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

IMPERIAL GUARD—MARSHAL MORTIER.

	Men
Old Guard Lt. Gen. Friant	4,000
Middle Guard Lt. Gen. Morand	4,000
Young Guard Lt. Gen. Duhesme	4,000
1st Cavalry Division . . Gen. Guyot	2,000
2d " " . . Gen. Lefebvre-Desnouettes	2,000
Artillery Gen. Devaux	2,400

Total Guard, guns 96, men 18,400

1ST CORPS—LT. GEN. COUNT D'ERLON.

1st Division Gen. Alix	17,600
2d " Gen. Donzelot	
3d " Gen. Marcognet	
4th " Gen. Durutte	
1st Cavalry Division . . Lt. Gen. Jaquinot	1,400
Artillery	1,564

Total 1st Corps, guns 46, men 20,564

2D CORPS—LT. GEN. COUNT REILLE.

5th Division Gen. Bachelu	19,435
6th " Prince Jerome Napoleon	
7th " Gen. Girard	
9th " Gen. Foy	
2d Cavalry Division . . Lt. Gen. Piré	1,865
Artillery	1,861

Total 2d Corps, guns 46, men 23,161

3D CORPS—LT. GEN. COUNT VANDAMME.

10th Division Gen. Hubert	13,200
11th " Gen. Barthezène	
8th " Gen. Lefol	
3d Cavalry Division . . Lt. Gen. Domont	
Artillery	1,400
	1,292

Total 3d Corps, guns 38, men 15,892

4TH CORPS—LT. GEN. COUNT GÉRARD.

12th Division Lt. Gen. Pecheux	12,100
13th " Lt. Gen. Vichery	
14th " Gen. Hulot	
6th Cavalry Division . . Lt. Gen. Morin	
Artillery	1,400
	1,292

Total 4th Corps, guns 38, men 14,792

6TH CORPS—LT. GEN. COUNT LOBAU.

19th Division Lt. Gen. Simmer	9,900
20th " Lt. Gen. Jeannin	
21st " Lt. Gen. Teste	
Artillery	
	1,292

Total 6th Corps, guns 38, men 11,192

was beyond doubt the most formidable band of warriors that had ever moved into the field.¹⁴

RESERVE CAVALRY—MARSHAL GROUCHY.

		Men
<i>1st Corps</i>	Lt. Gen. Pajol	
4th Cavalry Division	Lt. Gen. Soult	} 2,500
5th " "	Lt. Gen. Subervie	
Artillery		
		300
<i>2d Corps</i>	Lt. Gen. Excelmans	
9th Cavalry Division	Lt. Gen. Strolz	} 2,500
10th " "	Lt. Gen. Chastel	
Artillery		
		300
<i>3d Corps</i>	Lt. Gen. Kellermann	
11th Cavalry Division	Lt. Gen. L'Héritier	} 3,300
12th " "	Lt. Gen. Roussel	
Artillery		
		300
<i>4th Corps</i>	Lt. Gen. Count Milhaud	
13th Cavalry Division	Lt. Gen. Wathier	} 3,300
14th " "	Lt. Gen. Delort	
Artillery		
		300
Total Reserve Cavalry, guns 48, men		12,800
Grand total . . guns 350, men		122,401

SUMMARY.

	Infantry	Cavalry	Artillery	Guns	
Imperial Guard . . .	12,000	4,000	2,400	96	
1st Corps d'Armée . . .	17,600	1,400	1,564	46	
2d " " . . .	19,435	1,865	1,861	46	
3d " " . . .	13,200	1,400	1,292	38	
4th " " . . .	12,100	1,400	1,292	38	
6th " " . . .	9,900	—	1,292	38	
Reserve Cavalry . . .	—	11,600	1,200	48	
Waggon-train, Engineers, etc.	—	—	—	—	5,600
Total	84,235	21,665	10,901	350	5,600
Charras' figures differ, but not very following totals . . .	89,415	22,302	12,371	344	3,500

¹⁴ Charras says that the youngest of these troops had seen service since the early days of 1813, and formed the greater part of the army: the others had had from three to ten or twelve years' service. But he points out the following elements of weakness:—"The formation of the brigades, divisions, and *corps d'armée*

was of only two months' standing. The regiments had not the cohesive force and the unity which troops only acquire by prolonged community of work in time of peace, or, still better, from the perils of war. In June of the previous year they had undergone a complete reorganization; in December there had been amalga-

Napoleon's plan for the campaign was to advance as unexpectedly as possible upon the direct road through Charleroi to Brussels—the road which passed between Wellington's and Blücher's armies ;—to overwhelm the nearest enemy, the Prussians, and then to fall upon the Anglo-Allied army before it could assemble in strength ; to drive the two asunder and destroy them in detail ; to take Brussels, summon the Belgians to his support, and reannex the country to the Empire, with the boundary of the Rhine ; to awaken the small German states to movements in his favour ; to disconcert the projected advance of Eastern Europe upon France, or, uniting his Grand Army with his own nearest corps, the Army of the Rhine, to assail the approaching invaders both in front and flank ; to restore confidence in the Empire throughout France ; to force the Allies to open negotiations ; perhaps to cause a change of ministry in England—at all events, to gain the time, which was of vital importance to him, for calling out the full military strength of France. That his blow might be dealt suddenly, Napoleon veiled the movements of his columns behind the chain of frontier fortresses in his hands,

Prepara-
tions for
the Cam-
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mated with them a mass of men recalled from leave or returned from the prisons of the enemy ; in April and May a new amalgamation had taken place ; and the changes had been very numerous also among the staff of officers. Chiefs, officers, sub-officers, soldiers, had not yet acquired thorough knowledge of one another. . . . The soldier had unbounded confidence in Napoleon—but not for most of his chiefs. These men whom he had seen, time after time, in less than a year, pass with equal enthusiasm from the Emperor to the Bourbons and the Bourbons to the Emperor ; these courtesans of fortune

who were skilled, in their addresses and proclamations and orders of the day, in wronging the deposed master and adoring the master in the ascendant—they could not believe in their fidelity to the Imperial flag. They suspected them of meditating some grand treason ; and these vague but persistent suspicions agitated and pervaded the high regions of the general staff, as well as the lesser grades where obscure officers served—the former coming from the military household of Louis XVIII, the others lately the objects of the most inconsiderable royal favour."

Prepara-
tions for
the Cam-
paign.

June 13.

June 14.

while, to mislead the enemy as to the direction of their concentration, the forces of National Guards who lined the entire frontier were strengthened, and the outposts tripled toward the west, thus confirming Wellington's belief that the advance would be upon his right and deterring him from a closer junction with Blücher. Charleroi was the point designated for crossing the river Sambre and taking the highroad to Brussels, only 34 miles distant; Solre, Beaumont, and Philippeville, back of Charleroi and just within the French frontier, were the starting points for the three columns into which the French Army was divided. The march of the several corps from various quarters in the rear was so well timed that all reached their destinations at almost the same hour, excepting only the corps of Gérard, which was delayed. Next day the columns bivouacked at the places whence they were to begin their advance—the left (consisting of D'Erlon's and Reille's corps) at Solre; the centre (Vandamme's and Lobau's corps, the Imperial Guard, and the reserve cavalry) at Beaumont, the headquarters; the right (Gérard's corps, with a division of cavalry) at Philippeville. Thus, believing the enemy ignorant of their approach, and sheltering their camp fires behind hills, that their presence might not be disclosed, the French passed the last night before the opening of the war; for Napoleon had issued his orders for the advance of the whole army at 3 o'clock the next morning.

The Allies, however, were not taken wholly by surprise. Both sides were in possession of abundant secret intelligence, which enabled each to calculate very nearly correctly the real strength of the other, and to a certain extent the state of his preparations and his designs;¹⁵

¹⁵ Charras found, in the course of his researches in the War Office at the Hague, an illustration of the Allies' thorough information as to the

and there had for several days been warnings that the blow was about to fall, as well as assurances that the French would not move before July 1st. Aside from the spies, distinct notice had been sent Wellington from his outposts before Tournay that the enemy was mustering in force; and Zieten, the Prussian corps commander near Charleroi, sent him warning of the gathering of the two great camps at Solre and Beaumont, betrayed by their camp fires on the first night of the French assembling. "On the 13th and 14th," wrote Baron Muffling, who was constantly with Wellington at headquarters, "it was positively known that the enemy was concentrating in the neighbourhood of Maubeuge. The Duke of Wellington did not deem it expedient to make any alteration in his position until the enemy should further develop his mode of attack, as from Maubeuge it might be either upon Mons, Binche, and Nivelles, or upon Charleroi." So, on the night of June 14th, in the words of Chesney, we find "the English, save only their reticent chief and a few trusted officers, resting unconscious of the gathering storm before them."¹⁶ The Prussians were less quiescent. Gen.

Preparations for the Campaign.

[June 12, 13.]

June 14.

enemy's strength. This was a note, dated Ghent, June 10, from Clarke, Duke of Feltre, Louis XVIII's War Minister, to Gen. Constant de Rebecque, chief of staff to the Prince of Orange. It gave in detail the strength of the Imperial Guard and of the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 6th corps of the French army, and made their aggregate 120,000 men (see note 13, page 26). Clarke wrote: "The person who sends me these details, and who is instructed and perfectly sure, fearing to be compromised, has not been willing to give them in writing. They have been confided to the memory of the officer

who brings them, and upon whose sentiments we can rely."

¹⁶ It was the fashion of the earlier English writers upon Waterloo—Scott, Lockhart, Alison, for example—to explain Wellington's inaction by his reliance for information upon the ubiquitous Fouché. That accomplished liar gives the story in his own *Memoirs* as follows:—"My agents with Metternich and Lord Wellington had promised marvels and mountains: the English generalissimo expected that I should at the least give him the plan of the campaign. I knew for certain that the unforeseen attack would take

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Zieten had warned Blücher, at the same time that he did Wellington, of the enemy's approach. Blücher at once (11 P.M.) sent out orders to his corps commanders to concentrate in the direction of Fleurus—Bülow to

place on the 16th or 18th at latest. Napoleon intended to give battle on the 17th to the English army, after having marched right over the Prussians on the preceding day. He had the more reason to trust to the success of that plan, that Wellington, deceived by false reports, believed the opening of the campaign might be deferred till the beginning of July. The success of Napoleon, therefore, depended on a surprise, and I arranged my plans in conformity. On the very day of the departure of Napoleon I despatched Madame D——, furnished with notes written in cipher containing the whole plan of the campaign. But at the same time I privately despatched orders for such obstacles at the frontier, where she was to pass, that she could not arrive at the headquarters of Wellington till after the event. This was the real explanation of the inconceivable security of the generalissimo, which at the time excited such universal astonishment." This story has been contradicted on Wellington's behalf by his near friend, Lord Ellesmere, who denied that he at any time put confidence in Fouché; and it is entirely ignored by the school of writers—such as Siborne and Gleig—whose adulation of the Duke of Wellington amounts to a conviction of his infallibility, and who in this case applaud his refusal to act "prematurely." But more judicious critics, though his admirers, censure his delay. Sir J. Shaw Kennedy, who was on

Wellington's staff, writes in his *Notes on Waterloo*: "They were not surprised, they knew of the movements of the French quite in time to have enabled them to assemble their armies before Napoleon passed the frontier. They acted on a different principle, and determined to continue in their cantonments until they knew positively the line of attack. It may safely be predicted that this determination will be considered by future and dispassionate historians as a great mistake, for in place of waiting to see where the blow actually fell, the armies should have been instantly put in motion to assemble." Baron Müffling, also a friendly critic, says: "If the Duke had left Brussels on the 14th, at nine o'clock on the 15th he would have heard the cannonade. In that case Napoleon would have fallen into the Caudine forks on the 16th." = Baron Müffling, it should be explained, was the Prussian Military Commissioner with Wellington's army, and served as the medium of confidential communication between the Allied Marshals and their staffs; so that no one could surpass him in knowledge of the course of events, as the Prussian corps and brigade commanders were instructed to furnish him, for the information of the Duke, with the same reports of the enemy's movements that they sent to Blücher. The English were similarly represented in Blücher's staff by Col. Sir Henry Hardinge, afterwards Gen. Lord Viscount Hardinge.

march from Liége to Hannut; Pirch, from Namur to Sombreffe; Thielmann, from Ciney to Namur. Zieten was to await the advance of the French upon the Sambre, and, if compelled by superior numbers, to retreat as slowly as possible upon Fleurus and the three other corps there assembled. Zieten's dispositions had already been made to meet precisely the attack now threatened, and he awaited it without any alterations.¹⁷

Preparations for the Campaign.

June 14.

[*Note on Napoleon's health.*—The subject of Napoleon's health, bodily and mental, seems never to have received the attention due to it as a determining factor in the problem of this campaign. If it can be established that he was then labouring under the recurrence of a malady which temporarily incapacitated him—at times almost wholly—from physical or mental exertion, then we shall have an adequate solution of incidents which his most competent critics—Jomini, for instance—have felt themselves compelled to dismiss as “inexplicable” and as wholly irreconcilable with his known methods of warfare.

Napoleon's health.

Why this very simple explanation of the fast-accumulating shortcomings in the conduct of this magnificently conceived enterprise should have been generally overlooked by the disputants of both parties is plain enough. Those who tell the story from the French side have taken their text from Napoleon himself, who—even if he realized in what condition he had been—was constitutionally incapable of admitting that his miscarriage was due to any want of power in himself. Thiers, and the Napoleonists in general, have followed the example of their master in assigning the cause of his misfortune to a malignant destiny, to combinations of events which it passed the power of man to control—such as the elements,—or to derelictions of his lieutenants, rather than admit that Napoleon was wanting to himself.

English writers, on the other hand, have been as unre-

¹⁷ “An order of Zieten's,” says Charras, “dated May 2d, had laid down the movements for his troops in the different cases of attack that

could be foreseen; and it is exact to say that their manœuvres on June 15th were the application of this order.”

Note:
Napoleon's
health.

servedly the adulators of Wellington as the French of Napoleon. A theory that their hero triumphed over, not the great captain who had subjugated Europe, but an enfeebled and failing Napoleon, was one which they could not patiently entertain, or would examine only to repudiate it with contempt.

Besides, it is only since the standard histories of these events were written—even since Charras distinctly indicated the cause, but without substantiating it by proofs,—that the evidences of Napoleon's temporary suspense of power have been adduced from sources which are not to be questioned.

Chesney—who is one of the most honest and dispassionate, as he is certainly the ablest of the English critics of this campaign—has undertaken to pronounce judicially upon this point, and has declared the view taken by his countrymen. He says: "Certain French writers, among whom it is painful to number Charras, are disposed to impute a large share of their country's disaster to some supposed falling off of the physical energy and mental powers of the Emperor." Chesney offers to refute this by alleging that "his [Napoleon's] warlike capacity had never been more splendidly displayed than during that part of the struggle with the Allies of the spring of 1814 known as the Week of Victories. The General of Arcola and Rivoli," he continues, "was not more full of resource, nor more sudden and deadly in his strokes, than he of Montmirail and Champaubert." Chesney then refers approvingly to a note in Thiers' *Consulate and Empire*, in which, as he declares, the French historian has "sufficiently shown that he [Napoleon] was physically capable of fully bearing the fatigues incident to a bold aggressive campaign."

Thiers' statements in the note referred to are as follows:—"Contemporary testimonies as to Napoleon's health during these four days are very contradictory. His brother, Prince Jerome, and a surgeon attached to his staff, both assured me that Napoleon was suffering at that time from an affection of the bladder. M. Marchand, attached to his personal service, a man whose veracity cannot be doubted, assured me of the contrary. . . . Whatever may have been the state of Napoleon's health at this period, it did not in any way interfere with his activity, as may be seen from what follows. I have verified the account

of his movements by numerous and authentic witnesses, among whom the principal was Gen. Gudin. . . . Gen. Gudin was at that time seventeen years of age, and, as first page, brought his horse to the Emperor. He did not leave Napoleon for a moment, and the correctness of his memory, as well as his truthfulness of character, justify me in placing implicit confidence in his assertions." As Gudin will presently be cited in a very different sense, this testimony of Thiers to his trustworthiness is noteworthy.

Note:
Napoleon's
health.

The statement of Charras to which Chesney takes exception is this:—"Napoleon was old before his time (*vieux avant l'âge*). Long exercise of absolute power, the prolonged efforts of boundless ambition, excessive labours in the cabinet and in war, the emotions and anguish of three years of unheard-of disasters, the sudden fall of that Empire which he had deemed established for ever, the hateful idleness of exile, a twofold malady whose attacks became more frequent and more aggravated, had radically altered his vigorous organisation.—His eye flashed with the same brilliancy; his gaze had the same power; but his heavy, almost obese, body, his swollen and pendant cheeks, indicated the arrival of that time of life when a man's physical decline has commenced. He submitted now to the demands of sleep, which he had lately mastered at his will. The fatigue of long journeys on horseback or of rapid riding had become insupportable to him.—He preserved the same facility, the same abundance, the same force of conception; but he had lost perseverance in elaborating thought, and, what was worse, promptness and fixity of resolution. Like certain men in the decline of age, he loved to talk, to expatiate, and he wasted long hours in barren words. He hesitated a long time in taking a resolve; having taken it, he hesitated to act; and in the action itself he hesitated again. Of his old-time tenacity he retained only a frequent and already very mournful obstinacy in seeing things, not as they were, but as he thought it to his interest they should be. Under repeated blows of defeat, his spirit had become broken. He had no longer that confidence in himself which is an almost indispensable element in the success of grand enterprises: he even doubted his fortune, which, for fifteen years, had lavished such prodigious

Note :
Napoleon's
health.

favours on the General, the Consul, the Emperor. 'He even felt'—it is himself who avows it—'an abatement of spirit: he had the instinct of an unpropitious issue.'"

Chesney's repudiation of Charras' view was published in 1868. Had he been aware of facts subsequently made known—in the *Histoire et Mémoires* of the Count de Ségur, published in 1873, and the narrative of Gen. Gudin, upon whom Thiers relies, which is printed in the Earl of Albemarle's *Fifty Years of my Life*, published in 1876,—he could scarcely have gainsaid the accuracy of Charras' summary of Napoleon's physical and moral condition. An article in the *London Quarterly Review* (July, 1875) embodies this information on the subject, *à propos* of the disclosures in Ségur's *Mémoires*:—"Before the end of 1810, when he was in his forty-second year, he had contracted an inconvenient degree of *embonpoint*, and he told M. de Ségur's father that he could not ride the shortest distance without fatigue. Nor was this the worst. He was obliged to be constantly on his guard against a painful malady, an access of which might prostrate him at any moment when he required the unimpaired energies of both mind and body. There were four or five occasions on which the destinies of the Empire, of the world, were more or less influenced by this complaint. [The reviewer then quotes as follows from Ségur]:—"It is certain that at Schönbrunn, shortly after the great efforts of Essling and Wagram, towards the end of July, a malady that has remained mysterious suddenly attacked him. The most intimate of his chief officers knew its nature and have kept it secret. The others are still ignorant of it; but the entire sequestration of the Emperor during eight days, mysterious conferences between Murat, Berthier, and Duroc, their evident anxiety, and their prompt summons of Corvisart and the principal physicians of Vienna, all proves that serious alarm prevailed at the Imperial headquarters.'" The reviewer then relates, on Ségur's authority, how, "at Borodino, Ney, Davoust, and Murat called simultaneously for the Young Guard. 'Let it only show itself, let it only follow in support, and we answer for the rest.' Their messenger, Belliard, returned in alarm and haste to announce the impossibility of obtaining the reserve from the Emperor, whom he had found at the same place, with

an air of pain and depression, a dull drowsy look, the features drawn, giving his orders languidly and indifferently." Ney burst out in indignation at his master's inaction, when Murat interposed. According to Ségur, "He [Murat] remembered seeing the Emperor the day before, when reconnoitring the front of the enemy's line, stop frequently, get off his horse, and, leaning his brow against a cannon, remain there in an attitude of pain." Next is detailed his similar incapacitation at Dresden, August 28, 1813. Then how, "a few days before he left Paris for Waterloo, the Emperor told Davoust and the Count de Ségur *père* that he had no longer any confidence in his star, and his worn depressed look was in keeping with his words."

Note:
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health.

As to the nature of this malady, the *Quarterly* reviewer says: "Two short extracts from attestations signed by Ywan, his body surgeon, confirmed by Mestivier, the body physician during the Russian campaign, will suffice." He then quotes, in French, the passages thus translated:—"The Emperor was extremely susceptible to atmospheric influence. It was essential for him, in order to preserve the equilibrium, that the skin should always perform its functions. As soon as its tissue became hard (*tissu était serré*), whether from moral or atmospheric cause, the appearance of irritation manifested itself with an influence more or less grave, and the cough and suppression (*ischurie*) declared themselves violently. All these symptoms yielded to the re-establishment of the functions of the skin. . . . He was subject to moral influences, and the spasm ordinarily operated on the stomach and the bladder. The displacement from being on horseback augmented his sufferings. He experienced mishaps of this kind at the time of the battle of Moskowa." Napoleon himself, the *Quarterly* reviewer further notes, told the elder Ségur, in 1812, that "from his youth he had suffered from attacks, getting more frequent, it is true, of this infirmity, which he believed to be merely nervous."

Bearing in mind the testimony thus cited as to Napoleon's physical condition, it is not too much to claim that the instances of his prostration which will be enumerated in the course of the narrative are quite sufficient to account for the constantly recurring delays and the general slackness in

Note:
Napoleon's
health.

the French operations which brought to destruction this admirably conceived campaign and noble army. To facilitate collection of the evidence on this important subject, there may be given here a reference to the pages on which such evidences are described—note 24, page 47; n. 31, p. 56; n. 63, p. 115; n. 72, p. 125; text, p. 127; n. 138, p. 220; n. 148, p. 235; n. 256, p. 403.

At the cost of anticipating the narrative, it may be said that the facts established, in every case by the testimony of eye-witnesses, are as follows:—That, on the evening of the first day of the campaign (June 15), Napoleon was so “overwhelmed with fatigue” that he took to his bed before 9 P.M., which is stated in a letter written at the time and at his own command by Baron Fain to Joseph Bonaparte; that (on the testimony of Gen. Reille to Count Ségur) on the morning of June 16th—when hours were of the utmost value—Napoleon was sunk in prostration and languor, unable to attend to the affairs of the army; that (on the testimony of Gen. Grouchy, corroborated by the tacit assent of Soult and the entire headquarters staff), in the evening of the same day, he went to bed immediately after the close of the battle of Ligny, and was in such condition that none of his staff dared enter his chamber to procure his sanction for vitally important orders; that (on the same authority), on the morning of June 17th, there was the same impossibility of getting access to him to secure orders that ought to have gone out at daybreak, while that tendency to barren expatiation described by Charras caused a further delay of those orders until noon—a delay which enabled Blücher to effect his junction with Wellington at Waterloo; that (on the testimony of Gudin, as reported by the Earl of Albemarle), on the morning of the battle of Waterloo (June 18th), Napoleon secluded himself until nearly noon, and thus lost the hours during which he might have overwhelmed the Anglo-Allies before the coming up of the Prussians; that (on the relation of his staff officers, Turenne and Monthyon, to Ségur), during the progress of the battle, he remained motionless for long intervals, seated at a table, frequently sinking forward upon it, asleep; lastly, that (on the same authority), during the flight after the battle, he was so far sunk in the same state of drowsi-

ness, that he could only be kept in his saddle by Bertrand's and Monthyon's riding on either side and holding him on his horse.

If these facts are admitted, the allegation by Thiers and Chesney that Napoleon "was physically capable of fully bearing the fatigues incident to a bold aggressive campaign" is simply monstrous.]

Note:
Napoleon's
health.

At the first gleam of day ¹⁸ Napoleon, accompanied by his brother Jerome, was seen to step out upon a balcony at Beaumont, and carefully examine the promise of the weather—an important matter to him, since rain, in the heavy plains of Belgium, would seriously impede the rapid movements of his cavalry and artillery upon which he counted so much. All seemed fair as the hour arrived for the prescribed advance—the left column, from Solre upon the bridge over the Sambre, at Marchiennes, two miles above Charleroi; the centre from Beaumont; and the right from Philippeville, upon Charleroi itself. But the left alone was in motion at the appointed time,—Rielle's corps (the 2d) marching down the right bank of the Sambre, and its advanced division, under Prince Jerome, soon coming in contact with the Prussian outposts at Thuin, whom it drove in, skirmishing vigorously, upon Marchiennes and the head of the bridge. In the centre Gen. Pajol's corps of light cavalry, the advanced guard, moved off in accordance with its instructions, and forced back the enemy's skirmishers until it came upon the Prussian rearguard at the Charleroi bridge, where, being unsupported, it was checked. The infantry corps which should have followed in support of Pajol was that of Vandamme (the

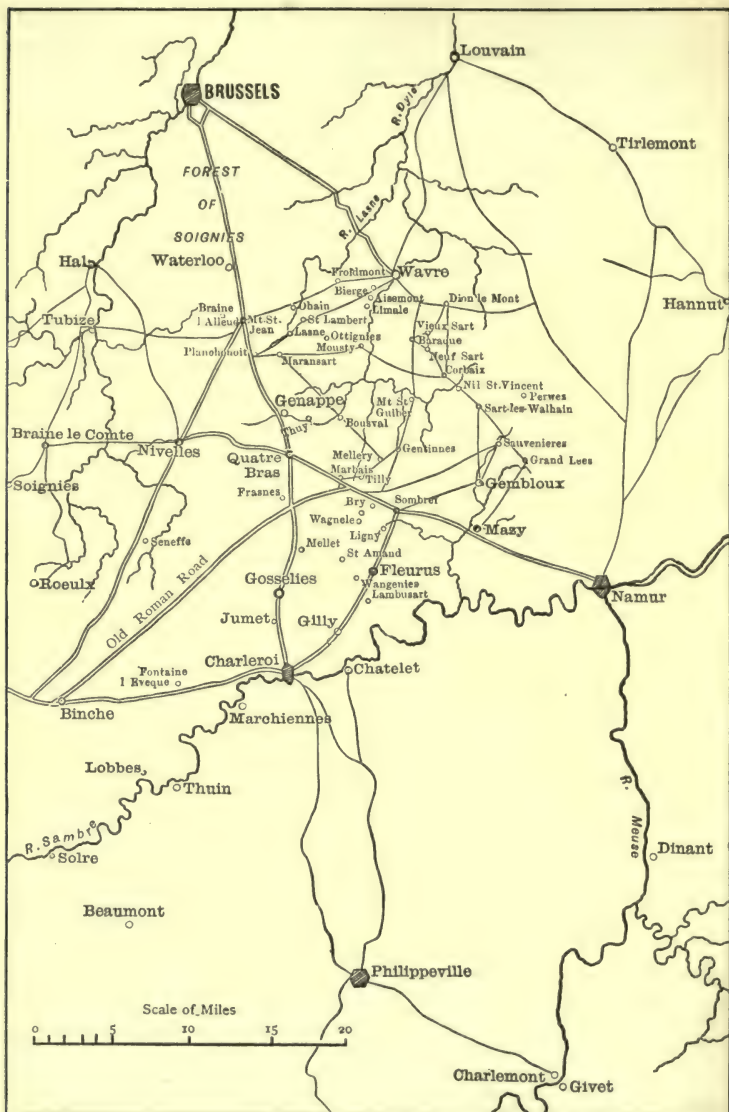
The Cam-
paign of
Waterloo;
June 15.

3 A.M.

4 A.M.

¹⁸ As many events during this campaign are fixed with reference to "daybreak," "sunrise," "sunset," etc., it is well to bear in mind that

on June 18th, at the Observatory of Brussels, the sun rose at 3.48 and set at 8.14.



3d); but he had received no orders, the officer who bore them having been injured on the way; so that the entire 3d corps lay quietly in bivouac until Lobau's corps (the 6th)—which, with the Guard and the reserve cavalry, formed the remainder of the column—came marching upon their rear, and, acquainting Vandamme with his duty, got his troops at last in motion. The right column was led by Gérard, whose corps (the 4th) had been tardy in coming up from Metz to the original rendezvous; so that Napoleon in issuing his orders the night before had qualified those to Gérard, instructing him to move with the others at 3 o'clock "if the divisions which compose this corps d'armée are together." He had, however, to wait two hours beyond this time for his rear divisions to come up, and, when otherwise ready to move, was checked by the serious discovery that the commander of his leading division, General de Bourmont, with two of his colonels and his staff, had deserted to the enemy. To report this fact to Napoleon and to receive his changed orders, which were to cross, not by the bridge of Charleroi, but by that of Châtelet, four miles to the eastward, so protracted Gérard's advance that the 4th corps did not get wholly across the Sambre that day and had no share in its operations. Thus began, at its outset, that series of delays which in their aggregate ruined Napoleon's brilliantly conceived Campaign of Waterloo.¹⁹ Meanwhile, the left and centre

The Campaign of
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¹⁹ Vandamme's delay, characterized by Napoleon as "*un funeste contretemps*," is charged by Thiers to Soult's failure to send a duplicate and triplicate of the orders, as had been done by Berthier, his predecessor as Chief of Staff. Chesney in reply justifies Soult only by showing that Berthier had on certain occasions taken no greater precautions,

and in illustration of the French staff organization he quotes from the Duke de Fezensac, who served upon it from 1806 to 1813. "Long journeys on duty," he says, "were made in carriages charged at the post rate; but some officers put the money in their pockets, and obtained horses by requisition. . . . As for messages taken on horseback, no person took the

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columns had swept back all the Prussian pickets on the south side of the Sambre, and reached the bridges.

pains to inquire if we had a horse that could walk, even when it was necessary to go at a gallop. The order must be executed without waiting for the means. . . . This habit of attempting everything with the most feeble instruments, this unbounded assurance of success, which at first helped to win us advantages, in the end became our destruction. . . . To ask for a guide would have been of no more use than to ask for a horse. An officer always had an excellent horse, knew the country, was never taken, met no accident, and got rapidly to his destination; and of all this there was so little doubt that often a second message was thought unnecessary." This testimony is important because of the endless series of miscarriages by all parties in this campaign, attributed to lost or delayed dispatches. On this same June 15th Gen. Zieten sent word to Wellington at 4 A.M. that he was attacked in force. "His staff service must have been poorly arranged," says Chesney, "since the officer who bore this important news did not reach Müffling until 3 P.M., having taken apparently eleven hours to traverse a distance which an ordinary pedestrian might have covered in the same time." In the same manner Gen. Steinmetz, the westernmost of the Prussian brigadiers, sent warning of the attack to the nearest English commander at 8 A.M., but the message does not seem to have reached Brussels before evening. It is on the score of this alleged failure on Zieten's part to warn the Duke that Gleig and other writers

seek to charge him with the tardy co-operation of the English, and to exonerate Wellington. = Bourmont's treason and its consequences have been much misrepresented in consequence of a misstatement of the time of his desertion. Napoleonist writers used to date the event on the 14th, and give it importance by alleging that the Allies were thus informed of the intention of the French to advance on the 15th. Napoleon's own bulletin of the 15th states that it occurred on that day, and Thiers expressly contradicts the old version. The Rev. John S. C. Abbott narrates the incident in his happiest vein: "This man [Bourmont], considering the cause of Napoleon now desperate, in the basest manner deserted, and carried to the Allies, as his peace-offering, the knowledge of the Emperor's order of march. Napoleon, a perfect master of himself, received the tidings of this untoward defection with his accustomed tranquillity. *Blücher welcomed the traitor Bourmont cordially*, and the Bourbons loaded him with honours. This event rendered it necessary for Napoleon to countermand some of his orders, *that he might deceive the enemy.*" The cordial reception is thus described by Siborne: "When General de Bourmont was presented to Blücher, the latter could not refrain from evincing his contempt for the faithless soldier; and to those who endeavoured to appease him and to impress him more favourably toward the general by directing his attention to the white cockade which he wore in a conspicuous fashion, the Prince bluntly remarked, '*Emerlei*,

That of Marchiennes was barricaded and defended by some battalions of Pirch's brigade, with two guns; but, after several attacks, it was carried, and Reille's corps began the passage of the river, the Prussians falling back, some upon Gilly, others directly upon Fleurus. At the bridge at Charleroi, Zieten, with the mass of the 2d brigade (Pirch's), made a resolute stand until Pajol's light horse were reinforced by some marines and sappers of the Young Guard whom Napoleon had hurried up by a side road to take the place which should have been filled by Vandamme: then the bridge was carried, and at noon the French were in possession of Charleroi and of both banks of the river above it.

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10 A.M.

12 M.

Possession of Charleroi gave the French access to the two important roads which diverge from it—the one, the great road running north to Brussels, the other, more eastwardly, through Fleurus and Sombreffe to Gembloux. About thirteen miles out of Charleroi on the Brussels road is Quatre Bras, and at an equal distance on the eastern road is Sombreffe, through which two villages runs, east and west, another chaussée which connects Namur with Nivelles. The ground bounded by these three roads formed what has been termed the "Fleurus triangle," and it became the key to Napoleon's

was das Volk für einen Zettel ansteckt! Hundsfott bleibt Hundsfott!" ("All the same, whatever ticket one stitches on him! A scoundrel stays a scoundrel!") The countermand of orders could in no possible way "deceive the enemy:" it simply diverted Gérard's march from the Charleroi road and bridge, already obstructed by Vandamme's delay, to another bridge otherwise unused, and is noteworthy only for the additional loss of time it involved. = Charras—after naming the five mem-

bers of Bourmont's staff who joined in his desertion—says: "The division abandoned by Bourmont was furious. Gérard rode at a gallop among their ranks, and endeavoured somewhat to calm them, assuring them that this abominable defection could not in any respect affect the results of the operations of the army." Bourmont, he adds, did not reach Charleroi until 8 A.M. on June 15th—at which hour the Prussian army was already moving in concentration.

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future operations, since the Namur-Nivelles road served as the communication between the Allied armies, and if the French could but hold Quatre Bras and Sombreffe (or Ligny) the Allies were severed, and could only reunite by falling back upon another position in the rear.²⁰ Napoleon now only waited for his centre column to defile over the bridge to direct it against the Prussians retreating upon their point of concentration at Fleurus; and at the same time he purposed pushing his left wing upon the Brussels road, to cut off the Prussians from the English and to seize Quatre Bras. At the time when he made his own way out of Charleroi, he found Reille's column on his left pushing the retreat toward Gosselies both of that portion of Pirch's brigade which it had dislodged from Marchiennes and also of the brigade of Steinmetz (the 1st),—which had formed the extreme Prussian right, as far westward as Binche, a force in all of some 10,000 men. The Prussians held

²⁰ Wellington and Blücher fully realised the importance of this position. "At a meeting held by them at Tirlemont on the 3rd May," says Chesney, "they had discussed the possibility of the enemy's advance through Charleroi in such an attempt to sever their armies, and had agreed as to the movements to be undertaken to counteract so dangerous an attack. . . . In the given case, the Prussian army was to assemble between Sombreffe and Charleroi, the English between Marchiennes and Gosselies. . . . Had these positions been attained, the Allied armies would have nearly touched, and have guarded all the approaches from the Sambre into the Fleurus triangle, so that whichever one Napoleon attacked would be aided by a flank attack upon him by the other. Such

were the Allied views beforehand. Yet, at 3 P.M. on the 15th, but one Prussian corps was near the ground, and saving one division (Perponcher's Dutch-Belgians), not a man of Wellington's army within reach of it, whilst the head of a column of 40,000 Frenchmen had passed the Sambre at Marchiennes, and that of another of nearly 70,000 was entering Charleroi!" It has generally been stated, following Siborne, that the Allies' intended points of concentration were at the two northern angles of the triangle, Quatre Bras and Sombreffe, with their wings several miles asunder; but the position above indicated, some miles farther southward, and within the triangle, would have brought them into close supporting distance.

Gosselies tenaciously, and it was not until Napoleon had sent forward successive reinforcements of all arms from his centre that Reille succeeded in ejecting them; when Steinmetz moved off in a well-conducted retreat, his rear protected by cavalry and artillery, in the direction of Fleurus, thus leaving open, so far as the Prussians were concerned, the road to Brussels. The Emperor had waited to see this accomplished and his left secured by the advance of Reille, in whose support D'Erlon's corps, now considerably in the rear, was ordered to follow along the Brussels road. He was about to take the Fleurus road, and to direct the more serious conflict already commenced in that direction between his centre, under Vandamme and Grouchy, and the Prussians under Pirch, when he was joined by Ney, who had just arrived from Paris. Amid hasty words of greeting, Napoleon invested the Marshal with the command of the left column, and gave him verbal orders to continue the advance toward Brussels.²¹ On the right, whither Na-

7 P.M.

²¹ It was just before Napoleon's departure from Paris that he wrote to the Minister of War (June 11), "Summon Ney. If he wishes to be at the first battle, let him report on the 13th at Avesnes, where my headquarters will be." Reaching Beaumont late in the night of the 14th, Ney was unable to follow the Emperor next morning, because his own horses had not arrived, and he could not procure any until he learned that Marshal Mortier had "fallen ill" in the town—mistrusting Napoleon's success, as Brialmont intimates. From him Ney bought two horses, as did his first aide-de-camp, Col. Heymès, when the two followed the army. The command thus suddenly given him was not a little perplexing, since he was ignorant of the strength

of the several divisions and regiments, even of the names of their officers, or their whereabouts. The instructions for this advance are said by Thiers to have been conveyed in the following manner:—"Do you know Quatre Bras?" said Napoleon to the Marshal. 'I should think so,' replied Ney; 'I fought in this locality in my youth, and I remember that it forms the nucleus of all the roads.' 'Go then,' replied Napoleon, 'and take possession of this post, by which the English might join the Prussians. Send a detachment in the direction of Fleurus to make observations.' This is the starting-point of Thiers' laboured falsification of Ney's subsequent course. There were four witnesses to the interview—Napoleon, Soult, Ney, and Heymès: Ney was

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Napoleon now rode, the Prussians had checked the French centre in its advance upon Fleurus. Gen. von Pirch, when forced out of Charleroi, had retired, in accordance with Zieten's orders, to Gilly, a village on the road to Fleurus two miles from the bridge of Châtelet; by which Gérard's right column ought long since to have crossed and so taken Zieten in flank. Here Pirch had abundant time, after concentrating the 2d brigade and effecting a junction with a detachment of the 3d (Jagow's) at Châtelet, to take up a strong position across the road, which he blockaded by an abatis; for Vandamme, originally late in reaching Charleroi, had to wait for the passage of his corps over a single bridge, and Grouchy, who had gone forward to reconnoitre, was deceived as to the strength of the Prussians, concealed as they were by some woods, and sent to the Emperor for further instructions. Thus it was not until Napoleon, riding across from the Brussels road, made a reconnoissance in person and gave orders for the attack, that the engagement began. It had already become warm, when Zieten—who had by this time effected the concentration of Jagow's and Henkel's brigades, which Pirch was covering—sent orders for a retreat upon Fleurus; and this was successfully accomplished, although the retiring columns were repeatedly charged by the four squadrons

3 P.M.

6 P.M.

killed before the controversy arose; Soult told contradictory stories about it, and cannot be credited; and the question of veracity lay between Heymès, who denied that instructions were given to take Quatre Bras, and Napoleon himself. To "lie like a bulletin" had long been a current by-word, as the universal estimate of Napoleon's veracity when detailing his military doings. The Rev. Mr. Abbott improves even upon Thiers, and alleges that Napoleon

said, "Concentrate there your men. Fortify your army by defensive field works. Hasten, so that by midnight this position, occupied and impregnable, shall bid defiance to any attack." Chesney's searching examination of the subject, a digest of Charras's, leaves no room to doubt that the supposed order to occupy Quatre Bras on June 15 was a pure afterthought, maintained subsequently by persistent falsehood.

de service which accompanied the Emperor, and which he himself launched against the Prussian rear under the lead of Gen. Letort of his own staff; but Letort received a mortal wound, and the French cavalry were repulsed by a charge of the Brandenburg dragoons sent against them by Zieten, and with an interchange of artillery fire the affair ended. The arrival of Steinmetz's brigade at St. Amand, a village behind Fleurus, completed the concentration of the Prussian 1st corps. Zieten's retreat on this occasion—the manner in which he collected his corps scattered from Dinant to Binche, a length of more than forty miles, and retarded the advance of overwhelming numbers from daybreak till late at night, over a distance of some fifteen miles—has been considered by military critics a model of such operations. Thus ended the day's conflict on the French right.

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On the left Ney had taken command of the column committed to him just after Reille had driven Steinmetz from the Brussels road at Gosselies. Ney followed up the retreat with Girard's²² division of Reille's corps, which pursued them toward Fleurus as far as the village of Wangenies, where Girard remained for the night,

7 P.M.

²² Some confusion has been introduced into accounts of this campaign through the similarity of the names of Gens. Girard and Gérard—both of whom are called Girard in the American edition of Gleig's *Story of Waterloo*, while both are called Gérard in that of Hazlitt's *Life of Napoleon*, and in that of Thiers' *Consulate and Empire* Girard is spoken of by both names indiscriminately, though Gérard is correctly styled. Gen. Girard, who fell at St. Amand la Haye, commanded the 7th division of Reille's 2d corps d'armée:

Count Gérard commanded the 4th corps. = In like manner, among the Prussians Gen. Pirch I, commander of the 2d corps, is to be distinguished from Pirch II, commander of the 2d brigade of Zieten's 1st corps. = It may also be noted that the division of Reille's corps which Prince Jerome was, by courtesy, said to command throughout the campaign, was really directed by Lieut.-Gen. Guilleminot; and confusion has arisen from the interchange of these names as the commander.

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his troops touching those of Vandamme and Grouchy, and thus maintaining the connection between Napoleon and Ney. Already Bachelu's division of infantry and Piré's of cavalry had pushed on toward Quatre Bras; and now Ney, leaving Reille with his two remaining divisions in reserve at Gosselies, followed them with two cavalry regiments of the Guard which the Emperor had left him, but with injunctions not to expose them in action and a promise to replace them next day with 5 P.M. Kellermann's reserve corps of heavy cavalry. But before Ney could overtake his troops, Piré's lancers had come upon the foremost of the outposts of the extreme left of the Anglo-Belgian army—a brigade of Gen. de Perponcher's Dutch-Belgian infantry division, under the command of Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar,—who were posted in the village of Frasnes, two miles south of Quatre Bras.²³ The lancers drove in the pickets, and, following them through Frasnes, attacked a battalion which, with a battery of Dutch horse-artillery, was drawn up in its rear; but they were met by so stout a fire of musketry and grape that they were forced to draw off until Bachelu's infantry came up to their support, when the combined force compelled the battalion to retreat. This it did as far as the wood of Bossu, which filled the south-eastern angle of the cross-roads of Quatre Bras, when it threw itself into the woods and covered the right flank of the remainder of Prince Bernhard's brigade, which he had drawn up to hold the Namur-Nivelles road, and which showed so strong a front and opened so hot an artillery fire that the French were checked. 8 P.M. Ney came up at this time, and reconnoitred in person. It was rapidly growing

²³ The village of Frasnes, on the west of the Brussels road,—not the hamlet on the Heights of Frasnes,

which is on the other side of the road, and nearer to Quatre Bras.

dark ; he could not discern the number of the enemy, who were partly hidden in the wood ; his men and horses were exhausted by seventeen hours' march ; and the firing from the direction of Fleurus showed him that he was already far in advance of the centre column, and in danger of being caught between the English and Prussian armies. He determined therefore not to take ground beyond Frasnes, and, leaving his troops there, rode back to Gosselies, where he gave necessary orders to Reille, and then returned about midnight to Charleroi, where he supped with the Emperor, who had also returned thither,²⁴ and remained in conversation with him for two hours ; after which, without taking rest, the Marshal again rode back to Gosselies, to concert with Reille the movements of the troops on the coming day.

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12 P.M.

June 16,
3 A.M.

In Brussels the day had passed very differently. For many weeks this capital had been the scene of constant gaiety, for here were assembled the Duke's staff and the families and friends of many of his officers, and it had also formed the rallying-point of numberless English tourists whom the approach of war had frightened from France and the Continent to this seductive resting-place, where the stir of military preparations only added zest to the daily round of holiday life. But the 15th of June was a marked day in the English society in Brussels, which was all astir about the great ball to be given in the

²⁴ "At 8 o'clock," says Charras, "he [Napoleon] returned to Charleroi, where were his headquarters in the same house Zieten occupied in the morning. 'Overwhelmed (*accablé*) with fatigue, he threw himself on his bed to repose for some hours.' " The last sentence is quoted by Charras from a letter written, at Napo-

leon's order, by Baron Fain to Joseph Bonaparte, and dated Charleroi, June 15, 9 P.M. The incident is noteworthy in consideration of Chesney's assertion, on Thiers' assurance, that Napoleon "was physically capable of fully bearing the fatigues incident to a bold aggressive campaign" (see note, page 32).

X

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evening by the Duchess of Richmond, and only its anticipation occurred to vary the ordinary course of things.²⁵ The Duke of Wellington was unaware that anything unusual was taking place until, in the middle of the afternoon, the Prince of Orange came in from the outposts to dine with him, and brought to him a vague report that there had been fighting in the

²⁵ Thackeray draws, in *Vanity Fair*, a picture of life in Brussels before the campaign opened, from which the following touches are taken:—"In the meanwhile the business of life and living, and the pursuit of pleasure, especially, went on as if no end were to be expected to them, and no enemy in front. When our travellers arrived in Brussels, in which their regiment was quartered, a great piece of good fortune, as all said, they found themselves in one of the gayest and most brilliant little capitals in Europe, and where all the Vanity Fair booths were laid out with the most tempting liveliness and splendour. Gambling was here in profusion, and dancing in plenty; feasting was there to fill with delight that great gourmand of a Jos: there was a theatre where a miraculous Catalani was delighting all hearers: beautiful rides, all enlivened with martial splendour; a rare old city, with strange costumes and wonderful architecture. . . . Every day during this happy time there was novelty and amusement for all parties. There was a church to see, or a picture gallery—there was a ride or an opera. The bands of the regiments were making music at all hours. The greatest folks of England walked in the Park—there was a perpetual military festival. . . . There never was, since the days of

Darius, such a brilliant train of camp-followers as hung round the train of the Duke of Wellington's army in the Low Countries, in 1815; and led it dancing and feasting, as it were, up to the very brink of battle. A certain ball which a noble Duchess gave at Brussels on the 15th of June, in the above-named year, is historical. All Brussels had been in a state of excitement about it; and I have heard from ladies who were in that town at that period, that the talk and interest of persons of their own sex regarding the ball, was much greater even than in respect of the enemy in their front. The struggles, intrigues, and prayers to get tickets were such as only English ladies will employ, in order to gain admission to the society of the great of their own nation." Thackeray gives glimpses of the ball itself in the course of his story; but very circumstantial details of its splendours, and of the incidents connecting it with the campaign, are given in Charles Lever's once popular novel, *Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon*. Here are introduced most of the sensational anecdotes current in their day, but long since disproved, and personal descriptions of nearly all the general officers of the Allied armies, for most of whom it would be easy to substantiate an *alibi*.

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morning near Thuin, but that the French had subsequently disappeared from there. After consultation with Baron Muffling—who now came in with Zieten's delayed dispatch of 4 A.M.²⁶—the Duke determined that the French design was not yet sufficiently developed to fix his own point for concentration, and he contented himself with issuing orders for the whole of his troops to assemble at designated points and hold themselves in readiness to march, and at the same time he sent to inquire of the outposts before Mons whether any movement of the enemy had been noticed in that direction. Later in the evening, as he was about setting out for the ball, he received a dispatch from Blücher announcing that Napoleon had crossed the Sambre, and one from Mons stating that all the French in that quarter had moved toward Charleroi. He then issued a second order, directing the concentration of the troops in the direction of Nivelles, and proceeded to the ball.²⁷

5 P.M. (?)

10 P.M.

²⁶ See note 19, page 40.

²⁷ The first orders had directed an assemblage of the divisions and brigades adapted to a concentration toward the left flank. The second order was in full as follows:—*"After Orders, 10 o'clock, P.M., Bruxelles, 15th of June, 1815.*—The 3rd division of infantry to continue its movement from Braine-le-Comte upon Nivelles. The first division to move from Enghien upon Braine-le-Comte. The 2d and 4th divisions of infantry to move from Ath and Grammont, also from Audenarde, and to continue their movements upon Enghien. The above movements with as little delay as possible. WELLINGTON."—It should be noted that the first order—without date as to the hour, which has been stated

all the way from 4 o'clock to 8—contains this instruction, which the second order does not modify:—*"The Prince of Orange is requested to collect, at Nivelles, the 2d and 3d divisions of the army of the Low Countries: and should that point have been attacked this day, to move the 3d division of British infantry upon Nivelles, as soon as collected. This movement is not to take place until it is quite certain that the enemy's attack is upon the right of the Prussian army, and the left of the British army."* This would have made Nivelles the easternmost point occupied by the British force, and have wholly abandoned Quatre Bras, already held by Prince Bernhard's brigade of the 2d division, the only point through

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Of the famous ball—where “all went merry as a marriage bell”—it need only be said that, at the Duke’s

which the English and Prussians could communicate; and would have left Ney an unimpeded road to within fourteen miles of Brussels. The commander of the division, Gen. Perponcher, saw the mistake; and, in the absence of the corps-commander, the Prince of Orange, who had gone with the Duke from dinner to the ball, he took it upon himself to retain his hold upon Quatre Bras—a step which was approved by the Prince, who, says Chesney, “reached Braine from Brussels before 3 A.M., having been treated with some petulance by Wellington for his display of anxiety as to the advance of the French against his corps.” The Prince’s anxiety seems more creditable than the Duke’s prolonged inaction; but Siborne gives another version of the incident. Rejoining to the allegations once in vogue that the Duke was “surprised” by the French advance, and unaware perhaps that the Prince had just been dining with his commander, Siborne says, “The only real surprise which the Duke experienced on that occasion was in finding the Prince of Orange, on the night of the 15th, at the Duchess of Richmond’s ball, when he delicately suggested to His Royal Highness the expediency of his returning to his corps.”=The story of a “surprise,” if not otherwise exploded, would have been disproved

by the date of the orders issued before the ball. The Rev. Mr. Abbott, however, seems to know all about it, and relates the circumstances with his wonted vivacity. “In the midst of the gaiety,” he tells us, “as Wellington was conversing with the Duke of Brunswick in the embrasure of a window, a courier approached, and informed him, in a low tone of voice, that Napoleon had crossed the frontier, and was, with his army, within ten miles of Brussels. Wellington, astounded by the intelligence, turned pale. The Duke of Brunswick started from his chair so suddenly that he quite forgot a child slumbering in his lap, and rolled the helpless little one violently upon the floor. The news instantly spread through the ball-room. Wellington and all the officers hastily retired. The energies of the Iron Duke were immediately aroused to their utmost tension. Buglesounded, drums beat, soldiers rallied, and the whole mighty host, cavalry, artillery, infantry, and field-trains, were, in an hour, careering through the dark and flooded streets of Brussels.” The Rev. Mr. Abbott’s mode of collecting his historical data is curiously illustrated in this passage. The idea of the Duke of Brunswick’s being in a window obviously comes from the lines in *Childe Harold*—

“Within a window’d niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick’s fated chieftain.”

A subsequent stanza, done into description of the army’s departure from Brussels, while one of its lines,

“And the deep thunder peal on peal afar,”

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desire, it was attended by the officers who had been invited, especially by those of his personal staff, but that it was hinted to division and brigade commanders and those from the outposts that they should take their leave early and repair to their respective commands. On various pretexts, they gradually retired; but Wellington remained until a late hour, and returned thanks after supper to the health of the Prince Regent proposed by the Prince of Orange, when he too departed, and the company soon broke up. "There might have been one hour's quiet in the streets of Brussels. The rattle of carriages was over. Light after light had been extinguished in chamber and in hall, and sleep seemed to have established its dominion over the city, when a bugle call, heard first in the Place d'Armes on the summit of the Montagne du Parc, and taken up and echoed back through various quarters of the town, roused all classes of people in a moment. From every window in the place heads were protruded, and a thousand voices desired to be informed if anything was the matter; for though they put the idea from them, few had lain down that night altogether free from uneasiness, and now the bugle's warning note seemed to speak to their excited imaginations of an enemy at the gates. Anxious, therefore, and shrill were the voices

is the foundation for his statement that everything went "careering through the dark and flooded streets of Brussels." Now, Lord Byron's "thunder" was a metaphorical reference to the sound of cannon—an anachronism, by the way, since there was no artillery firing within hearing-distance of Brussels until the next day,—but Mr. Abbott has taken it for the thunder which accompanies rain, and builds upon it

the statement that "for three days and nights the rain had fallen almost without intermission." As a matter of fact, the weather had been singularly fine, and, except for the heat, continued to be so until after night-fall of June 16th, when it rained at Ligny, but not at Quatre Bras or Brussels. Mr. Abbott's page, however, continues to be "flooded" from this time forward.

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2 A.M.

which demanded to be informed of the cause of this interruption to their repose. But there was little need to answer them in words: the bugle call was soon followed by the rolling of drums and the screaming of bagpipes. By-and-by regiments were seen, by the dim light of the stars, to muster in park, square, street, and alley—horses neighed—guns rumbled over the causeways—drivers shouted—and over all was heard, from time to time, the short quick word of command, which soldiers best love to hear, and obey with the greatest promptitude. The reserve, in short, was getting under arms, each brigade at its appointed alarm-post; and by-and-by, one after another, as they were ready, they marched off in the direction of the forest of Soignies.”²⁸ Day was approaching as Picton’s division marched out of Brussels on the Quatre Bras road, the Duke of Brunswick’s corps shortly following—their directions being to advance as far as the point beyond the Forest of Soignies where the roads diverge to Quatre Bras and Nivelles. Toward the latter point were coming at the same time the scattered detachments of their comrades on their right. Thus, at last, the Duke of Wellington was moving to establish, if it were not too late, his support of his ally, a full day after the enemy’s attack.²⁹

²⁸ The quotation is from Gleig. The picture of the bustle and stir, the partings, the grief of the wives and sisters and children left in Brussels, the terrors and suspense of the non-combatants who remained there for the next three momentous days, is drawn in chapters XXIX to XXXII of *Vanity Fair* as none but Thackeray could draw it. Lever gives incidents in *Charles O’Malley* which are spirited and convey a lively idea of the prevalent excitement, but are not historically valuable.

²⁹ The Duke’s prolonged delay of

course seemed faultless in the eyes of his countrymen who in those days recounted his achievements. “His Grace,” says Siborne, “was determined to make no movement until the real line of attack should become manifest; and hence it was that, if the attack had been made even at a later period, his dispositions would have remained precisely the same.” This may be termed “a statement of the fact, but no justification of it,” which is the expression Chesney applies to Hooper’s similar remark that Wellington, “never precipitate

The Prussian concentration was far more advanced at nightfall than was that of the English many hours later. The time gained by Zieten's masterly retreat had enabled Pirch's (2d) corps and Thielmann's (3d) corps to be near at hand. In accordance with the orders of the day before, Pirch was already on his way

or nervous, contented himself with issuing orders about 5 P.M. for the assembly of each division." Gleig goes even further, and makes his attendance at the ball the theme of admiration. Of the suggestion made him, that the Duchess of Richmond be advised to postpone her entertainment, this writer observes, "He rejected the counsel with a good-humoured joke, observing that it would never do to disappoint a lady of her Grace's merits; and thus, as his habit was, wrapped up the most important political considerations in an apparent regard to the punctilios of civilised life. The Duke knew that Brussels and Belgium generally would take the alarm soon enough; and he was too prudent to precipitate the event." Kennedy, though an admirer of the Duke's, says of his evening's stay in Brussels, "The Duke was throwing away golden minutes. By riding himself toward Charleroi at the first alarm, he would have seen for himself that this was no feint, and by next morning assembled troops sufficient to check Ney and aid Blücher." Continental critics agree as to the absurdity of his keeping his headquarters so far distant as Brussels, after it was known that the French were gathering,—that is, after June 12th or 13th. The example of the commander-in-chief of course found imitators. A curious illustration of the extreme deliberation of the English officers

is afforded by the letters of Sir Augustus Frazer, who, as the commander of the British horse-artillery, ought at this juncture to have been among the nearest to the front. In a letter dated Brussels, June 15, 10 P.M., he mentions that "Bonaparte is at Maubeuge, that he has about 120,000 men there, that he has advanced in the direction of Binche," and more to the same effect. He then proceeds, "Admitting all this to be true, we may have a battle the day after to-morrow. The Duke has gone to a ball at the Duchess of Richmond's, but all is ready to move at daybreak. Of course all depends on the news which may arrive in the night. By way of being ready, I shall go to bed and get a few hours' sleep. It is now half-past 11." Next morning, in a postscript dated 6 A.M.—at which time Ney ought to have been attacking the Belgian troops at Quatre Bras—Frazer writes, "I have sent to Sir George Wood's to hear if we are to move, which I conclude we are of course to do. . . . I have just learned that the Duke moves in half an hour. Wood thinks to Waterloo, which we cannot find on the map: this is the old story over again. . . . The whole place is in a bustle. Such jostling of baggage, of guns, and of waggons. It is very useful to acquire a quietness and composure about all these matters; one does not mend things by being in a hurry."

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Waterloo.

June 15.
Night.

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paign of
Waterloo.

June 15.
Night.

from Namur to Sombreffe, and Thielmann from Ciney to Namur, when the orders issued by Blücher immediately upon hearing of Zieten's being attacked quickened their advance; and Pirch was at Mazy, four miles from Sombreffe, by dark, and Thielmann at Namur, ten miles further off, each with orders to advance at daybreak; so that two hours' march would bring Pirch, and five hours Thielmann, to the position already taken up by Zieten at Ligny. But Bülow's corps (the 4th), through a series of misapprehensions and delays, was still at Liège, sixty miles away; and late in the night Blücher learned that he would thus be deprived of the support of 30,000 men on whose presence he had counted for the morrow's battle.³⁰

The French on their part showed an utter relaxation

³⁰ To understand Bülow's error requires consideration of the time at which the orders were sent. The 1st order, to concentrate his troops at Liège so as to be able to reach Hannut in a day's march, was sent on June 13th, but did not reach him until 5 A.M. on the 15th. The 2d order, sent on the 14th, to concentrate at Hannut, arrived at 10.30 A.M. on the 15th. The 3d order, sent on the 15th at 10 A.M., to Hannut, where he was supposed then to be, directed him to advance to Gembloux. The 4th, sent also via Gembloux to Hannut and carried on to Liège, directed his advance from Gembloux to Sombreffe. Thus each order presupposed the prompt execution of those before it. Now Bülow at the outset believed that there would be no hostilities until a formal declaration of war was made; he imagined that the concentration of the army was to take place at Hannut, so that his corps, lying

nearest, need not hurry; and Gneisenau, Blücher's chief of staff, had given him no intimation that there was urgency. He was in the act of executing the 1st order when the 2d arrived, so late in the morning that he could not have altered the movements of his troops till late in the afternoon; so he postponed its execution until next day, reporting to headquarters that he would be at Hannut by noon of the 16th. The 3d order lay waiting for him at Hannut until the bearer of the 4th found it and carried both on with him to Bülow—too late to be of any use. Bülow's messenger, announcing his intention to reach Hannut on the 16th, meanwhile reached Namur at 9 P.M. on the 15th, and found that Blücher had moved his headquarters to Sombreffe, whither it was forwarded. Bülow and Gneisenau were both in fault, the former for his delay, the latter for the vagueness of his despatches.

at the close of the day which went far to compensate for Wellington's delays and Blücher's loss of an entire corps d'armée from his expected strength. All over the Fleurus triangle their forces lay sprawled wherever the darkness had overtaken them. The position of the heads of their columns was all that could be desired. At daybreak Ney could seize Quatre Bras, and Napoleon destroy one by one the three still ununited Prussian corps, if only their forces were well in hand and their action prompt. But Ney's column was scattered in detached bodies all along the road from Frasnes back to Marchiennes, a distance of twelve miles; for D'Erlon's corps, which should have acted in close support of Reille's, had not yet come forward from the river. Of the centre column, the heavy cavalry of the Guard, two of Grouchy's four reserve cavalry corps, and all of Lobau's, bivouacked on the south of the Sambre at Charleroi. Half of the right column also, Gérard's corps, had not yet passed the bridge at Châtelet. Napoleon's orders had been explicit that the whole army was to have crossed the river before noon. Yet through the night some 35,000 men lay on the wrong side of the stream; and it was plain that hours of daylight would be required to get the troops together for action. The plan of sundering the Allied armies had indeed already been accomplished; but any further advantage to result from the carefully prepared surprise was slipping away through these accumulating delays.

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paign of
Waterloo.

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The dawn found the troops of each of the three armies astir and moving to effect their own concentra-
tion in anticipation of the enemy's. Napoleon, who had risen early, awaited at Charleroi reports of the Prussian movements about Fleurus, his troops meantime continuing the passage of the Sambre at both Charleroi and

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3 to 4 A.M.

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paign of
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6 A.M.

8 to 9 A.M.

Châtelet, and joining the main body, though still waiting for orders to move to the front. Intelligence presently arrived from Grouchy that the Prussians—Zieten's and Pirch's corps—were deploying before Fleurus; and some time was consumed by the Emperor in defining the dispositions for the day's movements and sending out the necessary orders for putting the troops in motion. By these orders the army was formed into two wings, each to operate on one side of the Fleurus triangle. On the left Ney was given the two corps he had had the day before—Reille's and D'Erlon's—together with Kellermann's corps of reserve cavalry; and he was ordered to move upon and occupy Quatre Bras, preparatory to further operations. On the right Grouchy was put in command of Vandamme's and Gérard's corps and the three remaining corps of reserve cavalry, with which he was to take up a position at Sombrefe, to push forward an advance guard to Gembloux, reconnoitring the roads, especially that to Namur, and establishing his connection with Ney. One corps, Lobau's, was left in reserve at the junction of the roads near Charleroi, to advance upon either as need might require; and the Guard followed the Emperor, who at noon drove up in his carriage to the troops of the right, which, passing Fleurus, now evacuated by the Prussians, were drawn up before Blücher's position.³¹

12 A.M.

³¹ Napoleon's loss of half a day at so important a time as this is thus commented upon by Hooper:—"The French army was aroused from its slumbers at daybreak on the 16th. . . . The sun rose, and the hours sped on, but no order of movement came from the Imperial headquarters. Six o'clock arrived, seven struck. The army remained motionless, ex-

cept that, in the Prussian front, Grouchy and his outposts were on the alert, eagerly watching the gathering of masses of troops above the plain of Fleurus. It is written that the old soldiers—and there were many in the army of Napoleon—stood in not mute astonishment at this inactivity. We have shown that Napoleon, his wearied troops having

The two battles which raged simultaneously this day must be described separately.

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Quatre Bras had remained during the night in Quatre Bras.

rested for five hours, might have concentrated, one mass near Fleurus, and another in front of Gosselies, by 5 in the morning. Yet at 7, some say at 8, not a man had moved from the bivouac of the preceding night.—This inactivity is admitted to be one of the puzzles of the campaign. Napoleon, whose motions were wont to be so swift, was now a laggard. . . . Every keen observer, fresh from the story of his earlier and even his latest campaigns, has noted with amazement, with a kind of sorrowful astonishment, the inactivity of the most active of great captains. And, as we may note, in nothing was that inactivity shown so much as in his absolute neglect to obtain accurate information. The consequence of this neglect was twofold:—1st, it produced the greatest hesitation in the adoption of any decisive plan; 2d, it led him to issue orders to his executive officers which it was impossible they could execute. . . . He did not obtain the information for himself, nor believe the intelligence sent in by Grouchy and Girard. . . . Hence the protracted halt on the morning of the 16th, hence the battle on the afternoon of that day, fruitful only in another bulletin. The long delay enabled Blücher to occupy the position of Ligny, and Wellington to march a sufficient number of troops upon Quatre Bras to frustrate, to repulse Ney.”=Jomini, in his *Summary*, speaks in similar terms:—“Napoleon had to renounce the idea of pushing on the

15th as far as Sombreffe and Quatre Bras, which were to be the pivots of all his after movements. But, to secure the success of his wisely combined plan, it behoved him to repair with activity and promptness, at day-break on the 16th, what had been left incomplete the night previous. Unfortunately for him, this was not executed with that activity that ordinarily distinguished him. We are forced to avow that the manner in which he employed this morning of the 16th will ever remain a problem for those who best understand it. . . . The Emperor of 1809 would not have failed to be in person at Fleurus by 8 o'clock in the morning, to judge of the state of things, and to verify the report Grouchy had sent him at 6 o'clock, announcing the presence of strong Prussian columns that were debouching from Sombreffe on St. Amand.”=The explanation of this incomprehensible thing is given in the *Mémoires* of Ségur, published in 1873:—“At Charleroi, on the morning of the battle of Fleurus [Ligny], the Emperor having sent for Reille, this general, on seeing him, was affected by a painful surprise. He found him, he told me, seated near the fireside, in a state of prostration, asking questions languidly, and appearing scarcely to listen to the replies; a prostration to which Reille attributed the inaction of one of our corps upon that day, and the long and bloody indecision of this first battle.” (See note, pp. 31–37.)

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4 A.M.

5 A.M.

6 A.M.

11 A.M.

possession of Prince Bernhard's brigade of Dutch-Belgians which had repelled the advance of Piré's lancers and Bachelu's infantry the evening before. In the early morning the other brigade (Bylandt's) of Perponcher's division began coming up from Nivelles, battalion by battalion, and presently Gen. Perponcher himself arrived and commenced an advance to recover the ground lost on the previous day. As his men were driving in the French outposts, the Prince of Orange rode in from Braine-le-Comte, and taking the command, continued the skirmish until his troops came upon the French supports at the Heights of Frasnes, and the action ended with the Prince establishing his line within less than a mile of the village. The Duke of Wellington with his staff—who had left Brussels at 8 o'clock—next came upon the ground and reconnoitred the enemy, whom he found motionless at Frasnes and apparently not in great strength. Having formed the opinion that nothing serious was to be apprehended in this quarter, and receiving information that the mass of the French army was moving upon the Prussian position, the Duke rode off to confer with Blücher.³² He

³² Charras—observing that “some writers have represented Wellington as reaching Quatre Bras thoroughly agitated and wild (*tout ému, tout effaré*)”—made inquiries of an officer who at this time accompanied the Prince of Orange. The officer said, “He was as cold as ice—as if the French had been a hundred leagues from us.” Thiers makes the Duke and the Prince of Orange arrive together at Quatre Bras, instead of five hours apart. “The Prince of Orange,” he proceeds, “had promised the Duke of Wellington to make every effort for the defence of Quatre Bras, and even to sacrifice both him-

self and soldiers for the attainment of so important an object. Confiding in this valorous lieutenant, the Duke of Wellington took his way along the highroad from Brussels to Namur, in order to consult with Marshal Blücher.” The degree of confidence which the Duke placed in the Prince two years before was shown by a letter which he wrote from Freuela, in Spain, to Lord Bathurst, May 18, 1813:—“The Prince of Orange appears to me to have a very good understanding, he has had a very good education, his manners are very engaging, and he is liked by every person who ap-

found the Field Marshal, with Gneisenau, in the wind-mill of Bussy, between Ligny and Bry, studying the French dispositions for attack in the plain below them and on the heights beyond. These confirmed his impression that Napoleon purposed exerting his strength against the Prussians; and he offered to assist them either by bringing his troops in their rear to act as a reserve, or by joining their right and falling upon the left flank of the French. Gneisenau preferred the former plan, and the Duke, though he thought otherwise, assented; and turned back to Quatre Bras with

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proaches him: such a man may become anything; but, on the other hand, he is very young, and can have no experience in business, particularly in the business of revolutions; he is very shy and diffident; and I don't know that it will not be a disadvantage to him to place him in a situation in which he is to be at the head of great concerns of this description; and that too much is not to be expected of him." The Prince was now two years older—that is 22 years of age,—and "the business of revolutions" had made him heir apparent to the new kingdom of the Netherlands, and aspirant to the hand of the English Princess Charlotte, and so a personage for whom a high position must be provided; but it was not because of the Duke's "confiding in this valorous lieutenant" that the Prince was made commander of the 1st corps of the Anglo-Allied army. = The esteem in which he was held, at this period, by those about him is indicated by a passage in the Earl of Albemarle's *Fifty Years of my Life*, describing his presentation to him when the Allies entered Paris after Waterloo:—"The Prince of Orange," writes

Lady Charlotte Bury, 'is good-humoured and civil, but he has no dignity. The Flemings are surprised to see his English aides-de-camp run up to him and slap him on the back.' . . . My brother [Viscount Bury, then captain in the 1st Foot Guards, and one of the Prince's staff] and Henry Webster . . . both admitted this cavalier behaviour to their chief, but added that it was entirely the Prince's own fault. He was a mere boy, delighting in rough practical jokes—but not complaining when he sometimes got a Roland for his Oliver." = On the whole, it seems clear that the position enjoyed by the Prince of Orange was not unlike that sought by the Three Kings of Chickeraboo in the *Bab Ballads*:—

"Great Britain's navy scours the sea,
And everywhere her ships they be.
She'll recognize our rank, perhaps,
When she discovers we're Royal
Chaps.

"If to her skirts you want to cling,
It's quite sufficient that you're a
king.

She does not push inquiry far
To learn what sort of king you are."

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2 A.M.

3 A.M.

the assurance, "Well, I will come, provided I am not attacked myself."³³

Ney had left Napoleon late in the night without receiving any positive orders for the day's operations. Riding at once to Gosselies, he ordered Reille to assemble his two remaining infantry divisions—Bachelu's having

³³ The interview of Wellington and Blücher in the windmill is thus related by Gleig:—"The Duke is said to have expressed with characteristic good-breeding, yet firmness, his disapproval of Prince Blücher's arrangements: 'Every man' (such is the substance of the words which the Duke is said to have spoken) 'knows his own people best; but I can only say that, with a British army, I should not occupy this ground as you do.' Blücher, however, represented that his countrymen liked to see the enemy before they engaged him; and adhered to the opinion that St. Amand and Ligny were the keys of his position. And the Duke was at once too wise and too much under the influence of a right feeling to press his point. . . . It is said that the Duke, as he cantered back to his own ground, turned to a staff officer deeply in his confidence, and said, 'Now mark my words: the Prussians will make a gallant fight; for they are capital troops and well commanded; but they will be beaten. I defy any army not to be beaten placed as they are, if the force that attacks be such as I suppose the French under Bonaparte are.'" Gleig repeats substantially this same story in a note to his translation of Brialmont. Hooper gives this variation:—"Lord Hardinge, then Sir Henry, had been requested by Blücher to proceed to Quatre Bras and solicit

some assistance from the Duke. 'I set out,' he says, 'but I had not proceeded far when I saw a party of horse coming toward me, and, observing that they had short tails, I knew at once that they were English, and soon distinguished the Duke. He was on his way to the Prussian headquarters, thinking they might want some assistance; and he instantly gave directions for a supply of cavalry. "How are they forming?" he inquired. "In column, not in line," I replied; "the Prussian soldier, Blücher says, will not stand in line." "Then the artillery will play upon them, and they will be beaten damnably," was the comment of the Duke.'" Still another version is given by Sir Edward Cust, in his *Annals of the Wars of the Nineteenth Century*:—"After parting from Blücher at the windmill of Bry, he [Wellington] met Gen. Gneisenau, and ventured to point out to him that the force collected at the extreme right of the position appeared scarcely sufficient for its defence. The chief of the staff happened to be gifted with a considerable share of self-sufficiency, and treated the English General's criticism with indifference. When, however, the Prussian Quartermaster-General rode away, Wellington, turning to Hardinge, . . . said, 'I fear you fellows will get well thrashed there when the French advance.'"

already gone forward, and Girard having remained near Fleurus, whither he had pursued the Prussians—and to advance to Frasnès. Thither he proceeded himself and attempted to get what information could be had as to the number and position of the enemy, and also of his own regiments and their commanders, of which he as yet knew little. While Col. Heymès, the only staff officer who had accompanied him to the front, was preparing this return by going from regiment to regiment, the Marshal sent messengers to Marchiennes with earnest instructions to expedite the march of D'Erlon, who ought to have joined him the day before, and then proceeded to make a personal reconnoissance of the enemy and his movements. Finding before him the Prince of Orange with a whole Dutch-Belgian division, he sent an officer to report to the Emperor that he was confronted by masses of men. At this time he received his first despatch of the day from the Emperor, stating that Kellermann's cavalry corps had been ordered to Gosselies to his support instead of the cavalry of the Guard, and asking information as to the enemy's strength and his own.³⁴ A subsequent order, together with a

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³⁴ The orders sent Ney on this day have been so misrepresented, and bear so materially upon his military conduct, that it is best to summarize them, with their dates, so far as

these can be ascertained. Their full text (in French) will be found in Siborne, chapter v. and Appendices XVI, XVII, XX, XXI, XXII.

Sent from
Headquarters
8 A.M. 1st

ORDER.

Received
by Ney.

Order. From Soult, Major General, at Charleroi to Ney.—Kellermann, with the 3d corps of cavalry, has been ordered to march to Ney's support. Lefebvre-Desnouettes's cavalry of the Guard is to rejoin the Imperial Guard. Has D'Erlon's corps joined him? What are the exact positions of D'Erlon's and Reille's corps, and of the enemy?

9 A.M. (P) 2d *Order. From Soult.*—Ney is to combine D'Erlon's, Reille's, and Kellermann's corps. With them to take position at Quatre Bras. To reconnoitre the roads to

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letter dictated by the Emperor, instructed him to advance with D'Erlon's and Reille's infantry corps and

ORDER.

Sent from
Headquarters.

Received
by Ney.

Brussels and Nivelles, "from which the enemy is probably retiring." To establish a division of cavalry at Genappe, and another at Marbais to cover the interval between Sombreffe and Quatre Bras. The Emperor is going to Sombreffe. Grouchy, with 2 infantry and 3 cavalry corps, will occupy Gembloux .

11 A.M.

9 A.M. (?) 3d. *Letter from Napoleon to Ney, written after the 2d Order, but received first.*—An amplification of Soult's (2d) official order, "but I wish to write you in detail, because it is of the highest importance." Napoleon, after taking Fleurus, will push on to Gembloux, when he will decide upon his further operations, "perhaps at 3 P.M., perhaps this evening." Ney by that time to be ready to march upon Brussels, with Napoleon and the Guard: "I wish to be at Brussels to-morrow morning." Ney's wing of the army now consists of 4 divisions of Reille's corps, 2 divisions of light cavalry, and 2 of Kellermann's cavalry, which ought to amount to 45,000 or 50,000 men. "You see sufficiently the importance of taking Brussels. . . . A movement so prompt and so abrupt (*brusque*) will isolate the English army from Mons, Ostend, etc. I desire your dispositions to be so made that at the first order your 8 divisions shall be able to march rapidly and without obstacle upon Brussels."

11 A.M.

10 A.M. 4th Order. *From Soult, in answer to Ney's dispatch that the enemy were present in force.*—Unite the corps of D'Erlon, Reille, and Kellermann, "who starts instantly to join you. With this force you can deliver battle and destroy all the enemy's force that can be at hand. Blücher was yesterday at Namur, and it is not possible that he has sent troops to Quatre Bras; so you have only to do with what comes from Brussels." Grouchy is about to move on Sombreffe (Ligny), and the Emperor is setting out for Fleurus.

11.30 A.M.

2 P.M. 5th Order. *From Soult, at Fleurus.*—The Prussians have drawn up a few troops (*un corps des troupes*) between Sombreffe and Bry. Grouchy will attack them at 2.30. Ney is to attack whatever is before him and drive it off vigorously, then to wheel toward the right column and aid in "enveloping" the Prussians. If the Emperor pierces them first, he will manœuvre toward Ney. (P) 5 P.M.

Kellermann's cavalry upon Quatre Bras, to push reconnoissances on the roads diverging thence, to establish a division with some cavalry at Genappe, and another at Marbais to cover the interval between Quatre Bras and Sombreffe. The Emperor further explained in his letter that, after disposing of the Prussians on his right—which he spoke of as an easy task, allowing probably for the presence of Zieten's corps only—it was his intention to push on to Brussels, and that he desired Ney to be prepared to join him promptly in this movement, "perhaps at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, perhaps in the evening," as he desired to reach Brussels in the morning. The force placed under Ney's command the Emperor estimated at from 45,000 to 50,000 men. Ney's present force, however, was less than 10,000 men; and he immediately sent back orders to D'Erlon and Reille to come forward, D'Erlon to take post at Frasnes and send one division to Marbais, while Reille was to advance to Genappe. Scarcely had he sent off these orders when a despatch was brought him from Reille, who said—dating at Gosselies, 10.15 A.M.—that he had just received a message from Girard, who was still near Fleurus, that heavy masses of the Prussians were taking ground in that part of the field; and that in consequence of this

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11.30 A.M.

Sent from
Headquarters.

ORDER.

Received
by Ney.

3.15 P.M. *6th Order. From Soult, beyond Fleurus.*—The battle is being waged hotly. Ney is to "manœuvrer instantly so as to envelop the Prussian right and fall upon his rear. Their army is lost, if you act vigorously: the fate of France is in your hands. . . . Do not hesitate an instant." 6 P.M.

Comparison of these orders with the events of the day as they actually occurred will entirely dispel the generally propagated idea that Ney lost the day through irresolution or sluggishness or an omission to use "his superior force." The controversy cannot be entered upon here

further than to say that Chesney and Charras thoroughly demolish the dissingenuous suppressions and perversions by which Thiers and the Napoleonists try to save the Emperor's reputation at the expense of the Marshal's.

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II A.M.

I P.M.

2 P.M.

intelligence—for the proposed advance must bring his right flank dangerously near the enemy,—he would hold his men in readiness to march, but would not move until further orders from Ney. The Marshal, who had just received Napoleon's order to unite the three corps and attack the force before him—these orders (the 4th) being in response to his own despatch stating that the enemy were before him in strength,—again sent back, summoning Reille and D'Erlon to support him at once. Reille had anticipated this message, and commenced his march to Frasnes, a distance which it took two hours to traverse, after which his troops had to form and deploy. Strengthened by Foy's and Bachelu's divisions, but anxious for D'Erlon's support also, Ney abstained from any vigorous attack, but began pushing forward his light troops. The Prince of Orange, meantime, had made ready to impede this advance and to hold Quatre Bras until the arrival of the reinforcements he was momentarily expecting from Brussels and Nivelles. This he was able to do until the time when Ney, calculating that D'Erlon's corps must be so close at hand that the sound of artillery would bring him quickly into action, ordered the attack in force with which the actual battle began.³⁵

³⁵ The hour of 2 P.M. is stated by Charras as that at which the battle began. "We fix it," he says, "from the Dutch reports and from English writers interested in contradicting these. Reille," he continues, referring to that general's *Notice Historique sur les Mouvements du 2^e Corps pendant la Campagne de 1815*, "says 'toward 2 o'clock.'" This question

is again considered in connection with the alleged simultaneous opening of the battle of Ligny (see note 52, page 95), which Charras dates at 2.30. = The forces on either side varied so much from time to time, as successive reinforcements came up, that it is necessary to state them at those intervals:—

At 2 P.M.—			French.			Anglo-Belgian.		
Infantry	.	.	.	15,750	.	.	.	6,832
Cavalry	.	.	.	1,865	.	.	.	—
Guns	.	.	.	38	.	.	.	16

The Prince of Orange, though compelled to give ground before the greatly outnumbering force which

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At 3.30 P.M. (after Picton, Van Merlen, and the Duke of Brunswick came up)—

	<i>French</i>	<i>Anglo-Belgian</i>
Infantry . . .	15,750	18,000
Cavalry . . .	1,865	2,004
Guns . . .	38	28

At 4.30 (?) P.M. (after Kellermann came up)—

Infantry . . .	15,750	} as before.
Cavalry . . .	3,765	
Guns . . .	44	

At 5 P.M. (after Alten came up)—

Infantry . . .	15,750	24,234
Cavalry . . .	5,165	2,004
Guns . . .	50	40

At 6.30 P.M. (after Cook and the Brunswickers came up)—

Infantry . . .	} as before	29,639
Cavalry . . .		2,004
Guns . . .		68

All these figures except those for 2 P.M. are in excess of the actual number of fighting men, because the succeeding statements are got by adding the number of each reinforcement to the number previously in the field, without allowance for killed and wounded. In the case of the Anglo-Allied army the cavalry was absolutely worthless, and the Dutch-Belgian infantry — 7,500 in number,—of little service at the outset, deserted wholly as the action became serious; so that both these items may fairly be deducted from Wellington's strength. = Ney's force has been grossly overstated. Never exceeding 21,000 men after all reinforcements had arrived, its strength is put by the earlier English writers, Lockhart for instance, at 45,000. At a much later day Alison wrote of the English force at 2 P.M. that "their whole force, with the Belgians, did not exceed at that time

20,000, all infantry, and Ney had more than double the number of troops, of whom 5,000 were cavalry, with 116 guns." Alison's whole account of this battle, in his first edition, is a marvel in its way. It is comprised in three paragraphs, the first of which has six sentences: of these six, four are wholly incorrect, containing no less than eleven material misstatements of fact. = A work in which accurate statements on such a point ought to be found—*The New American Cyclopædia*, edition 1863, article *Waterloo*—puts Ney's force at 40,000; says that he made his attack "after fatal hesitation;" and adds that D'Erlon's corps, "through Ney's misapprehension of Napoleon's orders, was kept marching throughout the whole day, between the two French armies, without rendering assistance to either." The revised edition of the *Cyclopædia* (1876) omits the remark about D'Erlon's march, but re-

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moved upon him, was anxious to hold if possible the line of heights crossing the Charleroi road at right angles about three-quarters of a mile south of Quatre



Bras. At three points along these heights—the village of Piermont on his left, the farm of Gemoncourt adjoining the Charleroi road in his centre, and the wood of Bossu on his right—he gathered troops enough to make a stand

peats the other two misstatements. = Charras has gone into these figures very carefully as to the French, and

varies materially from Siborne. He states Ney's strength at 2 o'clock—

Infantry	Bachelu's division	. . . 9 battalions	4,103 men.
	Foy's division	. . . 10 „	4,788 „
Cavalry	Piré's division	1,865 „

Ney's first reinforcement, Charras says, was at 3 o'clock, as follows:—

Infantry—Guilleminot's (Jerome's) division . . . 7,819 men

Kellermann, according to Charras, did not come up until after 6 P.M., and then brought only 1 of his 4 brigades (of which Charras does not give the

strength), whereas Siborne gives a strength equal to that of two brigades. Charras, no doubt, is correct. (See note 45, p. 84.)

when his general line was forced back thus far. The French had pushed the Dutch troops into the wood; a part of Bachelu's division was well advanced toward Piermont; and, though a Dutch battalion had succeeded in holding Gemioncourt against several attacks, the Prince's position had become extremely critical and its tenure almost hopeless, when he saw on the elevated ground behind Quatre Bras the scarlet masses of English reinforcements advancing by the Brussels road. This was Picton's 5th infantry division, consisting of Kempt's 8th and Pack's 9th British brigades, accompanied by Best's 4th Hanoverian brigade. Leaving Quatre Bras on their right, the division moved down the Namur road and were drawn up along it,—the leading regiment, the 95th, having been hurried forward to retain, if possible, possession of Piermont.³⁶

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3 P.M.

³⁶ Picton's was the first division of the reserve to march from Brussels, which it had left about 2 A.M. But Wellington still retained so much of his doubt about his safety on his right, that he ordered it to halt at Waterloo until he could acquaint himself with the condition of things at the front, and decide whether to direct it upon Quatre Bras or Nivelles. During its halt the division was passed by the Brunswick troops, which kept on as far as Genappe, where they halted until overtaken by Picton. The latter's orders to move upon Quatre Bras reached him about 12 o'clock, and enabled him to arrive barely in time to avert the loss of that position,—an event which must certainly have taken place had Reille's two divisions reached Ney half an hour earlier. = A succession of similarly opportune reinforcements throughout this day illustrated the

wisdom of the Duke's policy of putting off everything until the last moment. A specimen of its consequences is given in the journal of Capt. Mercer, already quoted. He had been careful to provide the rations and forage for the men and horses of his battery, as well as waggons and drivers for their transportation. But the farmers had begged for their waggons, that they might get in their ripening crops, and Mercer assented, upon the commune authorities becoming responsible for their prompt return when wanted. Mercer was roused early in the morning of the 16th by orders to march instantly to Enghien: he was obliged to set off without his provision train or food for his animals, and only recovered it after the battle of Waterloo—when most of the horses were dead. Reaching Enghien and finding no further

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The Duke of Wellington—who had returned from his meeting with Blücher just before Picton's arrival—ordered up a British regiment to hold Gemioncourt and its enclosures, which were still defended by a Dutch battalion led by Perponcher and the Prince of Orange; but the French directed a destructive artillery fire upon the Dutch, while their light troops carried the farm before the English aid could arrive; and Gemioncourt thenceforward became the centre of the French position.³⁷ Van Merlen's light brigade of Dutch-Belgian cavalry, who had just entered the field, advanced in support of their retreating countrymen; but they were charged and routed by Piré's lancers, who pursued them along the highroad toward Quatre Bras, whither the fugitives carried with them Wellington himself, who, however, succeeded in checking their flight behind the cross-roads, re-forming them, and getting them back to the front.³⁸ The Dutch infantry, mean-

orders, Mercer applied to General Vandeleur, commander of a brigade in the cavalry corps to which his battery was attached, for instructions where to go. "Whether naturally a savage," Mercer observes, "or that he feared committing himself, I know not; but Sir Ormsby cut my queries short with an asperity totally uncalled for. 'I know nothing about you, sir! I know nothing at all about you!' 'But you will, perhaps, have the goodness to tell me where you are going yourself?' 'I know nothing at all about it, sir! I told you already I know nothing at all about *you*!'" Left to his own lights, Mercer moved eastwardly until he fell in with Sir Hussey Vivian, another brigadier of the same corps, and joined his hussars, moving at all speed toward the can-

onade now heard from Quatre Bras, where they arrived after nightfall and the close of the battle.

³⁷ It would seem to be at this period of the battle that the incident occurred thus related by Thiers:—"The brilliant Prince of Orange, annoyed by their fire, had the hardihood to attempt to capture our batteries. He endeavoured to communicate his courage to the battalion protecting his artillery, and lead them against our cannon. Whilst he headed the charge, waving his hat, Gen. Piré sent forward one of his regiments, which, attacking the battalion in flank, drove it back, unhorsed the Prince, and very nearly made him prisoner."

³⁸ Charras—who repaid the hospitality of the Belgians in affording him a refuge from the persecutions

while, had been forced to abandon three of their guns, and follow their comrades into the wood of Bossu, into which the pursuing French also penetrated and continued during the remainder of the action to dispute its possession. On their extreme right also the French had established themselves in Piermont, anticipating the English regiment sent to hold it; but they failed in an attempt to push across the Namur road and take a thicket just in advance, their possession of which would have cut off communication between the English and Ligny. Thus Ney's position had become well established along the line which the Prince of Orange had desired to hold—his extreme left occupying the southern portion of the wood of Bossu, his centre at Gemioncourt, his right secure in Piermont, though never able to press beyond it. All along his front ran a narrow valley bordered on each side by hedgerows that gave shelter to the skirmishers who preceded his columns of attack, while the plateau back of Gemion-

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of Napoleon III, by glorifying their share in this campaign—describes the performance of their cavalry at this juncture. Van Merlen, he says, had a Dutch regiment of hussars and one of Belgian light dragoons; with the former of which, at the command of the Prince of Orange, he charged two French battalions, which were supporting their skirmishers, while the hussars were to be supported by artillery and by the Belgian dragoons. "The attempt," says Charras, "was not fortunate. The [French] Colonel de Faudras charged upon the hussars with the 6th chasseurs, followed by the 5th lancers; put them to rout; scattered next the supporting infantry; dispersed and sabred the artillery, of which one

battery was nearly annihilated. The dragoons sought vainly to break down this vigorous blow by resuming the charge of the hussars. After a lively encounter, in which they mingled boldly with their adversaries, they turned bridle, and galloped to rally in the rear of Quatre Bras. They were not again to form line during the day, for, unfortunately, an English battalion, deceived by the similarity of their uniform to that of our [the French] chasseurs, greeted them with a murderous volley as they approached the Namur road." Charras here follows Gen. Perponcher's report in the Belgian War Office. The incident of the mistaken uniform reappears henceforth with wearisome frequency.

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court afforded a commanding situation for his well-served artillery. = Wellington, on the north of the valley, had disposed of his forces thus:—his extreme left in the thicket opposite Piermont, near the passage of the Namur road over the valley; next, toward the right, Kempt's and then Pack's brigade, formed along and in advance of the Namur road, carried on the line as far as Quatre Bras, supported by Best's Hanoverians in a second line; and in Quatre Bras and in the wood of Bossu were the Dutch-Belgians. The timely arrival of the corps of the Duke of Brunswick, who closely followed Picton, enabled Wellington to strengthen his line throughout its whole extent, but particularly in the wood, where the approaching sound of the fire showed that the Dutch were giving ground before the advance of the French tirailleurs. The Duke of Brunswick himself, therefore, was requested to take up a position to the right-front of Quatre Bras, his left resting on the Charleroi road and his right communicating with Perponcher's division, part of which was deployed along the eastern skirt of the wood; and the infantry thus advanced was supported by the Brunswick hussars and lancers, in their rear; so that a check seemed provided against any such charge down the Charleroi road as that which had already scattered the Dutch horsemen. = The French, from the time of Picton's arrival, had directed against his infantry a heavy cannonade in order to disturb its formation; and now they drew up a battery on the heights west of Gemioncourt, from which, as well as from a cloud of skirmishers in advance, an incessant fire was poured into the Brunswickers; so that these raw troops were sorely tried by the rapid succession of casualties in their ranks, and were only held to their duty by the example of firmness set by their Duke, who calmly and almost carelessly

rode up and down in front of their line, smoking his pipe and giving his orders as imperturbably as if on parade.

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Ney had by this time perfected his arrangements for a general attack. Preceded by the strong line of skirmishers who had been for some time engaged with Picton's light troops in the valley, and supported by a most destructive artillery fire from the heights, two heavy columns of French infantry descended into the valley east of Gemioncourt. Wellington—seeing in what an isolated position the Brunswick corps would be left by this advance along their one flank and that in the Bossu wood on the other—determined not to await the attack, but to meet it. Retaining only the 92d regiment of Highlanders at their post on the Namur road at Quatre Bras, he ordered Picton to advance. Both brigades moved forward in line, overlapping and outflanking the heads of the French columns, and the opponents were rapidly nearing one another when the French fire slackened, their ranks hesitated, became disordered, and the British, bursting into a cheer, charged them with the bayonet and drove them, broken and routed, through the hedgerows and enclosures of the valley. On the English left one of Kempt's regiments (79th Highlanders) pursued the enemy up the opposite slope to his own position, and had to be recalled, disordered by its own success, to the general line now formed along the northern hedge row: on the right the 42d Highlanders and 44th regiment approached nearly to Gemioncourt, in which, and behind the nearest hedges, the French sought shelter.³⁹

³⁹ The account in the text follows English authorities, chiefly Siborne. Charras describes the charge thus:—
"To get at Picton's position, Bachelu had crossed the rivulet of Gemion-

court at the bottom of the ravine, its banks bordered by thick hedges, and a little beyond another ravine, less marked, but also furnished with hedges impenetrable at many points.

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On the western side of the Charleroi road, meanwhile, things had gone very differently. The French battery on the Gemioncourt heights commanding the plain had stormed incessantly upon the Brunswick troops below, until their Duke—who, in his haste, had marched without his artillery—sent to Wellington for cannon, and was furnished with four pieces; but in a few minutes two were dismounted and the other two disabled by the superior fire of the French. Now, too, there appeared along the edge of the wood of Bossu a battalion of French infantry in line, supported by two columns of infantry, and this again by cavalry; and at the same time cavalry began to move down the Charleroi road. The Duke of Brunswick, finding his hussar regiment cramped in its movements by the small space between the wood and the road, ordered it to cross the road and remain near Quatre Bras ready for action, while he put himself at the head of his lancers and charged the enemy's infantry; but these replied with so hot a fire

He passed these obstacles, but with difficulty, and disorder resulted in his columns. He had forced back the English skirmishers, and had reached the summit of the slope of the second ravine, and was taking stand upon the plateau, when he received a hail of balls and musketry, almost at the muzzle, from Picton's first line of six battalions, which, half reclining in the grain, finger on the trigger, had waited the approach of their adversaries. Under this terrible fire, Bachelu's regiments—whose ranks were still deranged, and whose artillery could not protect them, because they were within its range—wavered and hesitated. Picton saw it, and, prompt to resolve as to execute, charged them with the bayonet, threw them back beyond the two ra-

vines, and appeared along with them on the opposite slope. But, arrived there, he was fired upon at short distance by the regiment forming Bachelu's left column, the 108th. . . The English battalions are checked; and the lancers and chasseurs, seizing the opportunity, fling themselves upon them and throw them into disorder. The French line reforms under the protection of this brilliant charge, and, in its turn, thrusts back the enemy, bayonet at their back, into the ravine, and forces them to regain the plateau. But Bachelu attempts no more to repass the rivulet. This first encounter with the British soldiers had been very bloody. The ravines and their borders were covered with dead and wounded, blue coats and red."

that the lancers were dispersed and sought refuge in Quatre Bras. Finding himself overborne by numbers, the Duke now attempted to withdraw his infantry toward that of the English beyond the road; but the French infantry pursued closely, the storm of round shot tore through the column, and the approaching cavalry completed the dismay of these raw troops, and they broke and fled, while their Duke, gallantly attempting to rally them, was struck from his horse, mortally wounded.⁴⁰ To cover their retreat and at the same time

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⁴⁰ The Duke of Brunswick was struck by a musket-ball which entered his right wrist, and passed diagonally through his body. He was raised by the single staff officer with him, and carried by some of his soldiers across the Charleroi road to the rear of the Allied line. Here he revived sufficiently to ask for his second in command, and for some water, but none could be had. No surgeon could be found, until the approach of the fighting necessitated his being carried still further to the rear, where the staff-surgeon of the corps on examination found that he was already dead.—For years before the opening of this campaign, the Duke and his troops had received much attention in England. The Earl of Albemarle, describing his being presented to the Duke by the niece of the latter, the Princess Charlotte of England, says:—"Early in the year [1809] the Duke entered into a treaty with the Court of Vienna, engaging to bring into the field 2,000 men to act in concert with the Austrian Emperor against Napoleon. He soon succeeded in raising a corps of 1,200 men, principally university students, whom hatred of a foreign yoke had rallied round his standard.

In token of the disasters that had befallen him and his house, and of his resolve to avenge the insult offered to his dying father, or to die in the attempt, he clothed his little army in black, and as if these dusky habiliments were not sufficiently expressive of his feelings, he gave them a death's-head and cross-bones as the sole device on their arms and accoutrements. Scarcely had he taken the field when the armistice, which followed the defeat of the Austrians at Wagram, left him in the heart of Germany without an ally." He then fought his way to the coast and to an English squadron that took him and his men to England. Lord Albemarle describes him as being, in 1809, "a sad and somewhat stern-looking man, with sunken eyes and bushy eyebrows, and—what was then seldom seen in England—a pair of mustaches." At the opening of the campaign of 1815, the "Black Brunswickers" again came into prominence, and Sir Augustus Frazer, in a letter dated Brussels, May 22, sent home this description of them:—"I have just returned from a review at Vilvorde of the Brunswick troops: they made a very fine appearance. The Duke of Brunswick

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to check the advance of the French cavalry down the Charleroi road, the Brunswick hussars were ordered forward from Quatre Bras. Disordered at the outset by a straggling fire on their right flank from the still advancing French infantry, they quailed before the rapid onset of the chasseurs in their front, and, without striking a blow, turned and fled toward Quatre Bras, so closely pursued by Piré's men that, to the English regiments on the east of the road, both friend and foe appeared, during the hurried moment of their sweeping by, to constitute a single body of Allied cavalry, and only a few of the old soldiers of the 42d and 44th regiments discovered the truth in time to direct an oblique fire upon the passing flank of the French. The head of Piré's column dashed on in hot pursuit of the Brunswickers toward Quatre Bras, receiving, as they passed the 92d Highlanders, a staggering volley, that caused most of the squadrons to draw back and retire in good order; but the impetus of the leaders carried them on—almost riding down the Duke of Wellington,

was at their head. The troops consisted of a regiment of hussars, 2 squadrons of lancers, 2 corps of riflemen, 7 battalions of infantry, a troop of horse artillery, and a battery of artillery—in all about 7,000 men. . . . The Brunswickers are all in black, the Duke having, in 1809, when the Duchess died, paid this tribute of respect to the memory of his wife. There is something romantic in this. They are to change their uniform when they shall have avenged themselves on the French for an insult offered to the remains of the Duke's father. Is this chivalry, or barbarity?" = The Duke's death in battle, as so many of his house had fallen—notably his father, who was

shot through the breast while leading a charge at Auerstadt, on the bloody day of Jena, nine years before,—caused certain poetical tributes to be paid to his memory, as by Byron in *Childe Harold* (page 415); but these were comparatively few and reserved, as his personal character was bad. The absence of his name from Scott's *Field of Waterloo* is conspicuous, both because that poem contains a necrological list for Quatre Bras, and because of the conspicuous manner in which Scott had previously rendered poetical homage to the father (see page 433). Southey's reference to the Duke's death will be found in note 77, page 136.

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who escaped by calling upon the nearest of the Highlanders to lie down in the ditch lined by that regiment, and leaping his horse over them,—and they dashed in among the houses of Quatre Bras, cutting down the fugitives and stragglers who had sought refuge there, until they became aware of their isolated position. Singly and in knots they then endeavoured to ride back, breaking from the rear through the line of the 92d; but few, if any, escaped; and an officer of chasseurs who rode upon Wellington, then in rear of the Highlanders, had his horse killed under him and was shot through both feet, just as he was about reaching the Duke. The rearmost portion of the attacking column had not partaken in this headlong dash, but, as they passed beyond the flank of the two foremost of the British regiments, wheeled sharply to the right, in order to charge them in rear. The 42d Highlanders—the nearest and the first to recognise that the enemy's horse were upon them—hastened to form square; but before the rear face could be completed the lancers penetrated it, but not to destroy it, for to a man they were either bayoneted or taken; while the completed square beat off all further assaults. The 44th had a still more singular experience, for the French were close upon their rear before their approach was suspected, and there was no time to form square. "Lt.-Col. Hamerton . . . instantly decided upon receiving them in line. . . . Hamerton's words of command were, 'Rear rank, right about face!'—'Make ready!'—(a short pause to admit of the still nearer approach of the cavalry.)—'Present!'—'Fire!' The effect produced by this volley was astonishing. The men, aware of their perilous position, doubtless took a most deliberate aim at their opponents, who were thrown into great confusion. . . . The lancers now commenced a

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flight toward the French position by the flanks of the 44th. As they rushed past the left flank, the officer commanding the light company, who had very judiciously restrained his men from joining in the volley given to the rear, opened upon them a scattering fire; and no sooner did the lancers appear in the proper front of the regiment, than the front rank began in its turn to contribute to their overthrow and destruction."⁴¹ Thus ended Ney's first general attack. It had swept away the Dutch-Belgians and Brunswickers, but his veterans had made little impression upon the British regiments. It was at this juncture that Kellermann brought up the first of the promised reinforcements—Gen. L'Héritier's division, 1,900 strong, of heavy cavalry.

The battle now assumed a singular phase—becoming one of superb artillery and cavalry against infantry of no less good a quality, but almost unsupported. For the demonstrated worthlessness of the Brunswick and Dutch-Belgian cavalry had shown English and French alike that no account whatever need be made of them; the Allied artillery was entirely over-matched by the superior position and quality of the French guns, which, for some time yet, were also nearly doubly numerous; while the French infantry, in the absence of D'Erlon's corps, was so far absorbed by the operations on the

⁴¹ The quotation is from Siborne, who is enthusiastic over the achievement. "Never, perhaps," he comments, "did British infantry display its characteristic coolness and steadiness more eminently than on this trying occasion. To have stood in a thin two-deep line, awaiting and prepared to receive the onset of hostile cavalry, would have been looked upon at least as a most hazardous experiment: but, with its rear so

suddenly menaced and its flanks unsupported, to have instantly faced only one rank about, to have stood as if rooted to the ground, to have repulsed its assailants with so steady and well-directed a fire that numbers of them were destroyed—this was a feat of arms which the oldest or best disciplined corps in the world might have in vain hoped to accomplish."

extreme wings as to be of little avail in the principal struggle east of the Charleroi road. In this part of the field the English infantry were subjected to a most destructive artillery fire, the French gunners on the heights having got their range with a fatal precision that dealt destruction through their ranks, and only remitting their fire when their own cavalry moved to the charge. Kellermann's newly arrived horsemen, united with those already in the field, first swept down upon the two squares previously assailed, which received them with the same steadiness as before. Picton, seeing that succour could come from no other source, took the unprecedented course of attacking cavalry with infantry, and, uniting the Royals and 28th regiment, moved toward a point where he could throw in a flank fire in support of the 44th, when he suddenly formed square just in time to receive a body of lancers who dashed upon him through a field of rye so tall as to conceal their approach from men on foot. A like advance and formation was made by the regiments to the left, until a chain of squares connected Quatre Bras with the 95th regiment still in the woods opposite Piermont on the extreme left, the Hanoverians holding the line of the Namur road in the rear. Upon these squares the French horse delivered charge after charge, driving in upon one, two, or all of the faces simultaneously ; making a rush wherever they hoped to find a weak point, and riding through and through the intervals, until chasseurs, lancers, and cuirassiers became so inextricably mingled that they were obliged to retire and re-form, without having succeeded in breaking a single square. But no sooner had the cavalry drawn off than the tremendous cannonade began afresh, while a musketry fire was opened from the French light troops behind the hedgerows ; and, worse than all, it was discovered that the English had

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nearly exhausted their ammunition. Over and over this succession of onsets occurred, varied only by one unexpected charge in which a body of lancers cut down a Hanoverian battalion near the Namur road, but were driven back in disorder by other Hanoverians when they attempted to take the road itself. Along the Charleroi road also a heavy body of cuirassiers made a dash upon Quatre Bras, routing once more and finally the Dutch-Belgian horse;⁴² but they were checked

⁴² As this is the last appearance of the Dutch-Belgians at Quatre Bras—for the infantry part of them had by this time got themselves out of the Wood of Bossu—it may be well to follow them on their homeward way. Siborne had this account of them from officers of the 1st British division:—"On a near approach to the field the latter fell in with various groups of Dutch-Belgian infantry retiring in great disorder and precipitation. Perceiving that they were neither wounded nor dispossessed of their arms, they questioned some of them as to the cause of their retiring. From one party they received a reply that their commanding officer was killed, and therefore it was useless to remain; from another, that they did not come there to fight, but merely to witness the advance of the French; and from a third, that Napoleon would certainly be victorious, and that it would therefore be absurd to contend against him." For the reappearance of the Belgians in Brussels we must turn again to *Vanity Fair*, in whose pages Thackeray recounts the return of one of the warriors to his sweetheart in her own kitchen, on the evening of June 16:—"As far as his regiment was concerned,

this campaign was over now. They had formed a part of the division under the command of his Sovereign apparent, the Prince of Orange, and as respected length of swords and mustachios, and the richness of uniforms and equipments, Regulus and his comrades looked to be as gallant a body of men as ever trumpet sounded for.—When Ney dashed upon the advance of the Allied troops, carrying one position after the other, until the arrival of the great body of the English army from Brussels changed the aspect of the conflict at Quatre Bras, the squadrons among which Regulus rode showed the greatest activity in retreating before the French, and were dislodged from one post and another which they occupied with perfect alacrity on their part. Their movements were only checked by the advance of the British in their rear. Thus forced to halt, the enemy's cavalry (whose bloodthirsty obstinacy cannot be too severely reprehended) had at length an opportunity of coming to close quarters with the brave Belgians before them; who preferred to encounter the British rather than the French, and at once turning tail rode through the English regiments that were behind them,

and driven back in confusion by the 92d Highlanders, still holding the ditch beside the road.

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and scattered in all directions. The regiment in fact did not exist any more. It had no headquarters. Regulus found himself galloping many miles from the field of action, entirely alone. . . . [*In the kitchen in Brussels.*] His regiment had performed prodigies of courage, and had withstood for a while the onset of the whole French army. But they were overwhelmed at last, as was the whole British army by this time. Ney destroyed each regiment as it came up. The Belgians in vain interposed to prevent the butchery of the English. The Brunswickers were routed and had fled—their Duke was killed. It was a general *débâcle*. He sought to drown his sorrow for the defeat in floods of beer. . . . Although Regulus had vowed that he was the only man of his regiment, or of the Allied army almost, who had escaped being cut to pieces by Ney, it appeared that his statement was incorrect, and that a good number more of the supposed victims had survived the massacre. Many scores of Regulus's comrades had found their way back to Brussels, and—all agreeing that they had run away—filled the whole town with the idea of the defeat of the Allies. The arrival of the French was expected hourly; the panic continued, and preparations for flight went on everywhere. . . . Addresses were prepared, public functionaries assembled and debated secretly, apartments were got ready, and tricolored banners and triumphal emblems manufactured, to welcome the arrival of His Majesty the Emperor and King.—The emigration still continued, and wherever families

could find the means of departure, they fled. . . . Louis the Desired was getting ready his portmanteau [in Ghent], too. It seemed as if Misfortune was never tired of worrying into motion that unwieldy exile." Natural as it was for the English to aim bitter jests at the Belgians, they might bear in mind two things—1st, that it was England which had supervised the creation of the mongrel Kingdom of the Netherlands, greatly to the disgust of the subjects compelled to serve under it, and who had good grounds for thinking that it was none of their quarrel; and, 2d, that it was these same derided Dutch-Belgians who had held Quatre Bras against the French for a full day before a single English bayonet or sabre—thanks to the sagacious arrangements of the Duke, dining and ball-going in Brussels—had been moved to its defence. = At the time it was the fashion among the English—following the example of Wellington, who suppressed as far as possible all mention of the conduct of these troops—to extol the bearing of their Belgian allies. In *Charles O'Malley*, which echoed the popular sentiment of the day, we read of the position of things at the time Picton's division came up, "Bravely and gloriously as the forces of the Prince of Orange fought, the day, however, was not theirs." This curious attempt to pervert the truth is considered, in reference to the conduct of the Dutch-Belgians at Waterloo, in note 158, page 245. The fugitive French royalists had the same impressions. Bourrienne's *Mémoires* contain a letter from the

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As the result of this period of the battle—when the cavalry was again withdrawn, to re-form for another charge, and the batteries recommenced playing upon the squares,—the position of the English was critical in the extreme. On their right the wood of Bossu was almost wholly in the hands of the enemy, who was concentrating there a force of infantry and artillery to turn their flank, seize Quatre Bras, and cut off their retreat to Brussels; on their left they were already hard pressed by greatly outnumbering light troops from Piermont, evidently mustering for a serious attack on that flank also; and in the centre, where their ammunition was almost expended and their ranks frightfully thinned by the pitiless cannonade, it was seen that a fresh attack from the cavalry was impending. Most fortunately for them, reinforcements were at hand—Gen. Alten, with Sir Colin Halkett's 5th British brigade and Kielmansegge's 1st Hanoverian brigade, and accompanied by a British and a Hanoverian foot battery, each of six guns,—amounting in all to above 6000 men. Halkett—in answer to a message from Pack that his brigade was out of ammunition and must abandon its position unless immediately supported—sent the 69th British regiment to the eastern side of the Charleroi road, to support the remains of the 42d and 44th, now consolidated into a single battalion. With the rest of his brigade he moved into the space between the road and the Bossu wood, thus encouraging the Brunswick infantry to remain in that part of the field, which they were about abandoning precipitately. Kielmansegge's brigade strengthened

Marquis de Bonnay, Louis XVIII's minister at Copenhagen, in which he says of the news from Quatre Bras, "The Prince of Orange must have acquired great honour by sustaining the shock and repulsing, with great

loss as the letter says, Bonaparte and his 80,000 men. You must excuse me for not deploring the loss of the Duke of Brunswick, who was not good for much except on the day of battle."

the wasted centre and the menaced left flank. Ney also had received a reinforcement, Gen. Roussel's division of Kellermann's cavalry, 1400 strong; but he was much impressed by his great inferiority in infantry since the Allies' last reinforcement; and once more he sent back to D'Erlon a peremptory order to support him without a moment's delay. At the same time he prepared to follow up his advantages at the wings by directing another general attack against the English centre, and for that purpose massed his cavalry in great strength along both sides of the Charleroi road. Gen. Halkett had detected the preparations for this movement, and, as soon as he had completed the dispositions of his own brigade, rode forward to reconnoitre almost into the rear of Gemioncourt. The horse were already beginning to move when he galloped back and sent warning to Pack, and ordered his own 69th regiment to prepare to receive cavalry—a warning which was also reinforced by the increased severity of the cannonade from the heights. "The 69th regiment was in the act of forming square, when the Prince of Orange rode up to it and asked what it was doing. Col. Morice replied that he was forming square in pursuance of the instructions he had received, upon which His Royal Highness remarked that there was no chance of the cavalry coming on, ordered him to re-form column, and to deploy into line. During this last movement a strong body of French cuirassiers, taking advantage of the surrounding high corn and of the circumstance of the regiment lying in a hollow, approached unperceived quite close to the spot, and, rushing suddenly and impetuously upon a flank, succeeded in completely rolling up the regiment, riding along and over the unfortunate men, of whom great numbers were cut down, and in the midst of the confusion thus created captured and carried off one of the

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colours. . . . The 30th regiment, which had also been deployed into line by the orders of the Prince of Orange, most fortunately discovered in sufficient time the approach of cavalry (notwithstanding the extraordinary height of the rye, which greatly impeded all observation), formed square with remarkable rapidity, and, reserving their fire until the very last moment, they completely dispersed and drove off a body of Piré's lancers which had so suddenly come upon them."⁴³ As to the regiments on the left, the incidents of previous charges were repeated, none of the squares yielding to the onset. The cuirassiers who had wrecked the 69th regiment moved on at the head of a mass of cavalry upon Quatre Bras; but by this time the two lately arrived foot-batteries had taken their post on either side of the Charleroi road in front of the village, and just at this moment a battery of horse-artillery of the King's German Legion came up and wheeled into position at the intersection of the roads. "Two guns . . . were posted so as to bear directly upon the French column, and completely to enfilade the road; and as the cuirassiers approached with the undaunted bearing that betokened the steadiness of veterans and with the imposing display that usually distinguished mailed cavalry, a remarkably well-directed fire was opened upon them: in an instant the whole mass appeared in irretrievable confusion; the road was literally strewn with corpses of these steel-clad warriors and their gallant steeds; Kellermann himself was dismounted, and compelled, like many of his followers, to retire on foot."⁴⁴

⁴³ This and succeeding quotations otherwise unacknowledged are from Siborne.

⁴⁴ Thiers' version of this incident is that Kellermann, "being thrown from his horse, and with his head

uncovered, to avoid being left on the field took hold of the bridles of two cuirassiers, and returned thus suspended between two horses at full gallop."

Ney was engaged in the direction of this attack, and was impatiently awaiting the arrival of D'Erlon's infantry to participate in it, when a messenger arrived bearing Napoleon's order (the 5th), dated at Fleurus, 2 P.M., stating that his attack on the Prussian position would commence at 2.30, and directing Ney to "drive off vigorously whatever might be before him," and bring his forces toward Ligny to aid in enveloping the Prussians. But Ney had thus far been anything but successful in driving off what was before him, and, in the absence of D'Erlon, he could do little more than continue the cavalry attacks which had already disordered Kellermann's ranks and seriously diminished their numbers. On his extreme right, where he had hoped to turn Wellington's flank, Kielmansegge's Hanoverians and a Brunswick battalion had now joined the British riflemen, and their combined force was steadily bearing back the French light troops from one enclosure to another and gaining ground in the direction of Piermont. On his left, however, the Marshal made, with the force he had been accumulating in the Bossu wood, a resolute push to seize the Charleroi road at the point where shelter was afforded by an isolated house with enclosures some distance in advance of Quatre Bras; but the French were charged desperately by the 92d Highlanders, who emerged from their ditch along the road, dislodged the enemy, and, in spite of a wasting flank fire from the French horse-batteries, drove him back into the wood, which the surviving Highlanders also entered, to escape a charge of cavalry in their rear. Halkett's brigade, also, and the Brunswickers were now at hand to hold the part of the field between the road and the wood.—It was when he seemed thus checked throughout the length of his line that Ney received the Emperor's most urgent order (the 6th)—

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that sent from before Ligny at 3.15 P.M., announcing that the battle there was serious, that the fate of France was in Ney's hands, and enjoining him instantly to fall upon the flank and rear of the Prussians.⁴⁵ The bearer of this order had proved superserviceable. He had met near Frasnes the head of the 1st corps on its march to Quatre Bras—D'Erlon and his staff having ridden on in advance of his command,—and had taken upon himself to order, in the name of the Emperor, that its movement be directed upon Ligny. He then proceeded and, overtaking Count D'Erlon, explained to him what he had done and where the General would find the head of his corps.⁴⁶ Ney thus learned that, instead of

⁴⁵ The order of events detailed in the text has been almost wholly that given by Siborne. Charras makes the very important variation of deferring Kellermann's appearance in the field until this juncture. At 6 o'clock, Charras says, Ney received Napoleon's 3.15 P.M. dispatch, telling him that "the fate of France is in your hands" (see note 34, page 63). He thereupon sent for Kellermann, who brought up only one of his brigades, but left his 2d division and the dragoon brigade of the 1st division—which, Charras says, were not in action, as has been generally represented. "As soon as Ney saw him [Kellermann], he galloped to him, and, maddened by the dispatch from Fleurus, said, wringing his hand convulsively: 'My dear General, there must be a great effort here; this mass of infantry must be forced. The fate of France is in your hands; go! I will support you with all Piré's cavalry.' This mission might have brought a frown to more than one of those men of iron, accustomed to launch hurricanes of

cavalry: it astounded, they say, Kellermann himself, the hero of Marengo, the leader of many an onset of heroes; but it did not daunt his heart." If Charras is correct, the previous cavalry charges must have been made by Piré's horsemen only.

⁴⁶ This version of the order which caused D'Erlon's false march differs from that told by Siborne, and generally accepted at the time he wrote, in 1844,—that there were two messengers, one of whom bore the regular official order (Order 5th, note 34, page 62), the other (Col. Laurent, Siborne calls him) bringing, about the same time, "a pencilled note requiring the Marshal to detach the 1st corps toward St. Amand." Chesney, however, says, "Charras has examined the D'Erlon question fully in the light of the *Documents Inédits*, published by Ney's son, and has established on their evidence the fact that the corps was turned off by an excess of zeal on the part of an aide-de-camp, carrying the original or duplicate of one of the extant orders of Napoleon, that of a

the eight infantry divisions on whose support he had reckoned for his contest with Wellington, he was likely to have but three—since that of Girard and the four of D'Erlon had been taken from him. Instantly he sent after D'Erlon a peremptory order to return toward Quatre Bras with all speed. But it was already too

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quarter past 3 (Order 6th, page 63). No fresh order ever reached Ney for such an oblique movement as that made." Napoleon himself declares that no such order came from him, when—in Gen. Gourgaud's *Napoleon: Campagne de 1815*, really Napoleon's own narrative—he says of D'Erlon's approach to Ligny, "Napoleon could assign no reason for such a movement. . . . The movements of the 1st corps are difficult to explain. Did Ney misunderstand the order to make, *when master of Quatre Bras*, a diversion on the rear of the Prussians? Or did D'Erlon, between Gosselies and Frasnes, hearing a hot cannonade to his right and none from Quatre Bras, conceive that he ought to move upon the cannonade, which he would have left behind him if he followed the main road onward?"=The over-zealous aide-de-camp, according to Brialmont, Charras, and Chesney, was Labédoyère, not Laurent, as said by Siborne, who says, on a later page, of a messenger present at Ligny at about this same hour, "there is reason to believe that it was Gen. Labédoyère." D'Erlon's own account of his false march is thus quoted by Charras:—"About 11 or 12 o'clock Marshal Ney sent me an order to get my corps under arms and direct it upon Frasnes and Quatre Bras, when I should receive further orders. My corps was in motion

instantly; and, after having directed the general who commanded the head of the column to use diligence, I went on to see what was passing at Quatre Bras, where Reille's corps appeared to be engaged. On the further side of Frasnes I met some generals of the Guard, when I was joined by Gen. Labédoyère, who showed me a pencilled note which he was carrying to Marshal Ney, and which enjoined the Marshal to direct my corps upon Ligny. Gen. Labédoyère informed me that he had already given the order for this movement, changing the direction of my column, and he indicated to me where I could rejoin it. I at once took this route. . . . Had Gen. Labédoyère any business (*mission*) to change the direction of my column before seeing the Marshal? I think not." Heymès gives the same story, except that he makes Colonel Laurent the messenger, instead of Labédoyère. The Duke of Elchingen, Ney's son, gives an incident which goes to show that the fault originated with the messenger, not with Napoleon:—"Some time after his return from St. Helena," he says, "Gen. Bertrand—who had the impressions of the Emperor, and was inspired by his ideas—said to me in a conversation on the affair of Quatre Bras, 'Why did the Marshal send D'Erlon to us at St. Amand?'"

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6.30 P.M.

late,—for the lately balanced battle was now decided by the fresh forces which came up to Wellington's support. From the direction of Brussels came two battalions of Brunswick infantry and the long-expected brigade of Brunswick artillery, which, added to the British and German batteries, produced a marked effect upon the now outnumbered French guns. Almost at the same time appeared on the Nivelles road General Cooke's 1st British division, consisting of Maitland's 1st and Byng's 2d brigades of Guards, above 4,000 men. The Prince of Orange galloped to meet them, and—this time giving the right order—directed them into the wood of Bossu, which the French had now filled almost to its northern boundary. The Guards went in with cheers, and fell upon the enemy with an ardour that bore all before it, the sharp incessant rattling of their musketry telling their countrymen beyond the wood of their steady progress through it, and animating them to renewed exertions. This determined advance knew no check until the French were driven thoroughly out of the wood, and the Guards even pursued them into the open ground beyond, but in a condition so totally disordered by the obstructions through which they had made their way that they were checked by the French reserves and artillery, and were obliged to fall back to re-form their ranks. Threatened by a body of French cavalry from the side of the Charleroi road, the Guards hurriedly fell into line in the order in which the men emerged from the wood, and in this rude formation advanced upon the French infantry in the plain, the Brunswick guard-battalion coming up from the rear to form in prolongation of their left. Before they could unite, the cavalry made a dash upon the left flank of the Guards, who, in consequence of their promiscuous array, were unable to form square. The men, equal

to the emergency, instinctively made for the ditch skirting the wood on their right, lining it with surprising rapidity and pouring a volley into the horse which turned them back in confusion and drove them past the Brunswickers, now in square, who in turn delivered a fire upon their flank that drove them entirely from this part of the field. The shouts of triumph sent up by the British on the right were answered by their countrymen and allies on the far left, who had at last dislodged the French infantry from Piermont and its enclosures. They were taken up and re-echoed by the worn regiments in the centre line, that had borne the brunt of the battle, when Wellington, as night was falling, led them forward upon the French position. Ney saw the hopelessness of prolonging the contest, and withdrew his whole forces, falling back upon the heights of Frasnes.⁴⁷ Wellington occupied the position

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⁴⁷ Of the coming up of Cooke with the Guards, Charras says:—"This deployment of forces would have determined any other than Ney on beating an instant retreat. He—the general of hard-fought days, of critical hours—he sought still to maintain his position. He was about to be compelled, nevertheless, to yield to the impossible. His artillery is now too feeble; a charge of Piré's fails on the plateau; Guilleminot gives ground under the pressure of the English Guards; and, as if everything combined to thwart the intrepid Marshal, news comes that he can no longer count on D'Erlon. This unlooked-for intelligence, it is said, brought despair to the heart of this man, rudely tried as he had been by the most terrible crises of war; and, under the cross-fire of the English batteries, in the

midst of projectiles glancing about him, he was heard to cry, 'You see these balls! I wish they had all entered my belly.' = He resigned himself to order a retreat all along his line. It was executed in good order, with the greatest firmness, disputing the field foot by foot, and so slowly that it took two hours to recede half a league. = Toward 9 o'clock the action had wholly ceased." Though the mass of D'Erlon's corps was absent, a part of its cavalry, Brialmont says, came up in time (about 9 o'clock) to cover the retreat of Jerome's (or Guilleminot's) infantry, which Cooke's and Alten's brigades, under Wellington's direction, were endeavouring to follow up sharply; and thus the French were enabled to resume their morning's position without further disaster.

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held and lost by the Prince of Orange in the opening of the battle—the wood of Bossu, Gemioncourt, and Piermont.

9 P.M.

After the battle had been lost, and as the armies were settling in their bivouacs, Gen. D'Erlon joined Ney with the 1st corps.⁴⁸

Ligny.

The position taken by Prince Blücher after the Prussian retreat upon Fleurus was one which had previously been selected, and its whole ground surveyed, in anticipation of the very contingency which now arose. Its strategic importance—holding the north-

⁴⁸ The losses in killed, wounded, and missing of the British, Hanoverian, and Brunswick troops at the battle of Quatre Bras were 3,463 (British 2,275, Hanoverians 369, Brunswickers 819): the Dutch-Belgians were of course all "missing," but their loss was called 1,000; and allowance for the corps which aggregated their losses for the whole campaign, not itemizing for this particular day, brings up the total Anglo-Allied loss, as generally stated, to 5,200. The French loss was 4,140 (4,375 according to Charras). The severe treatment received by special British regiments is shown by the following figures:—Pack's brigade, which endured the most of the French cavalry attacks, lost 788 men out of 2,173; the 92d Highlanders, originally 588 strong, lost 286, mostly in their charge from the Charleroi road across the plain to the wood of Bossu; the 69th, the regiment ridden down in consequence of the officious meddling of the Prince of Orange, lost 152 out of 516; and of Maitland's 1st brigade of Guards, who

numbered 1,997 when they entered the wood, there fell during the brief remainder of the fight 514 men. Of the total British loss of 2,275, it is noteworthy that but 32 were "missing." = Among the wounded on this day, though none but himself suspected it at the time, was Gen. Picton—who had magnificently sustained the reputation won in the Peninsular War as commander of the "Fighting Division." The discovery was only made after his death at Waterloo, when his body was taken to Brussels and made ready for the grave. On his side, above the hip, there was found a large bladder of coagulated blood distending the skin, evidently the result of a contusion by a round shot: two of his ribs were broken, and the injury, the surgeons declared, must ultimately have proved mortal. Lest he should be considered disqualified for the greater battle which he knew to be imminent, he endured this necessarily painful hurt for two days without disclosing it even to a surgeon.

eastern apex of the Fleurus triangle and all the roads which converge there from western and northern Belgium, and from Germany and the Rhine—was extremely great under any circumstances, but especially so if Wellington should at the same time hold Quatre Bras, only six miles distant.⁴⁹ The position proper to be maintained by the Prussian army lay along and in advance of the Namur-Nivelles highroad on either side of its intersection by the road from Fleurus to Gembloux—that is, upon the chain of heights on the westernmost of which stands the village of Bry, Sombreffe being in the centre, and Tongrines on the east. But the actual conflict of the armies was likely to be not so much on these heights as in the villages thickly clustered in the valley at their feet, through which flows the stream of the Ligny. In the centre

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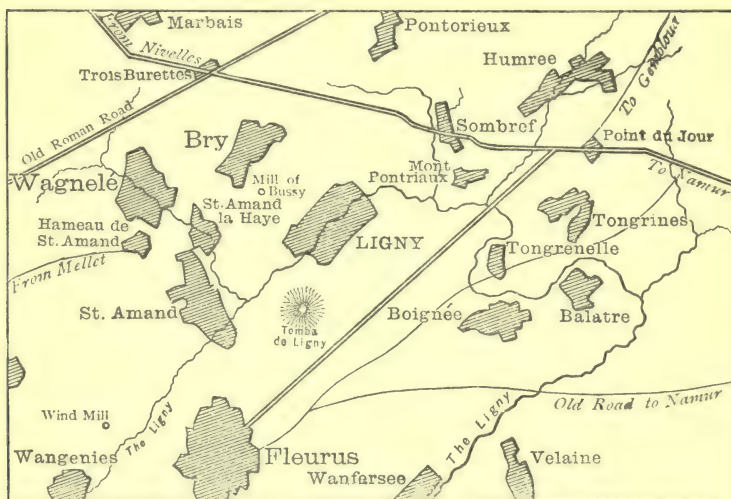
⁴⁹ The full strategic, as distinguished from the tactical, value of Sombreffe (or Ligny) is explained by Siborne: "Should it prove tenable, then—considered in conjunction with the advance of the Russians from the Rhine—the whole line of the Meuse below Namur, and the communications of Aix-la-Chapelle and the Prussian States, were effectually secured. If, on the other hand, either position [Ligny or Quatre Bras] were forced by the enemy, then Mont St. Jean and Wavre, upon parallel lines of retreat toward Brussels and Louvain, would likewise offer the means of co-operation on the south side of the Forest of Soignies; and, supposing Blücher willing to risk his communication with the right bank of the Meuse, concentric lines of retreat upon Brussels would bring the two armies in combined position in the imme-

diate front of the capital. Supposing also that Napoleon's plan had been to advance by Mons, the concentration of the Prussian forces could not have been effected upon a more favourable point than that of Sombreffe, whence they could have advanced in support of their allies, leaving a sufficient portion of Zieten's corps to watch the approaches by Charleroi: and, finally, had the French Emperor directed his main attack by Namur, the retreat of Thielemann's corps would have secured time for effecting the concentration of the 1st, 2d, and 3d Prussian corps d'armée, if not also of the 4th, while the Duke of Wellington's forces might have assembled at Quatre Bras, for the purpose of meeting any secondary attack from the Charleroi side, and of forming a junction with the Prussian army."

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of the valley, and on both banks of the stream, is the village of Ligny, which gave its name to the battle; upon the gentle slopes which bound the valley on the west are the villages of St. Amand, St. Amand la Haye, and Wagnel ; on a more rapid descent is Mont Pontriaux, toward the north-east; and on the eastern side of the valley, which is steep, are Tongrines, Boign e, and Balatre. The houses in all these villages are of stone, with walled or hedged enclosures that offered great opportunities for defence. An enemy



approaching the Namur road from Fleurus must first take the villages on his left, for, on the right the highroad is commanded on either hand by Ligny and Boign e, and further on would be swept by fire from Mont Pontriaux and Tongrenelle. Difficult as it was of access, the Prussian position tactically was weak. The heights behind Fleurus were much greater than those on the north of the valley, so that to Napoleon every movement of the enemy was carried on

below him and in full view, whether in the valley or beyond it; and his batteries could play upon the remotest part of the Prussian position and cover every approach by which their supports and reserves must reach the villages.⁵⁰ On the French side also the make of the ground was such that the distribution of considerable masses of troops could be effectually concealed. = Zieten's (1st) corps—which had ended its retreat of the previous day at the villages nearest Fleurus, and had passed the night in them—in the morning occupied Bry, St. Amand la Haye, St. Amand, and Ligny, and the tract of ground included by them,—the main body of the corps being drawn up on the height of the farm and windmill of Bussy between Bry and Ligny, while battalions filled the villages or were posted in their support, and the cavalry watched the movements of the French. Pirch's corps (the 2d), on coming up from its halt for the night at Mazy, was formed in reserve to that of Zieten,—the infantry holding the Namur-Nivelles road from its intersection with the old Roman Road on the extreme right and extending eastward to the position designated for the 3d corps about Sombreffe, while its cavalry was stationed in reserve behind the Namur road, and the artillery, such as was not in reserve, joined Zieten's in taking positions likely to command the approaches of the French. Lastly, Thielmann's 3d corps came up from Namur, and was posted across the angle formed by the cross-roads, its right

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8 A.M.

11 A.M.

12 M.

⁵⁰ Wellington's dissatisfaction with the Prussian position has been already noted (note 33, page 60). Müffling also found fault with the occupation of St. Amand; and Jomini calls the position "detestable." Brialmont says that "it was

subject to these grave disadvantages, that its right rested upon nothing, and its front was so encumbered with obstacles that no opportunity of acting was afforded to the numerous and excellent Prussian cavalry."

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at Sombreffe, its left at Balatre. The ground thus occupied had originally been selected in the expectation that Bülow's corps also would be present ; and Blücher's plan now was to protract the battle until either Wellington should join him on his right, coming from Quatre Bras, or Bülow from Gembloux in his rear, or, failing both, to hold the villages against the French until nightfall, when he could choose between retiring and still awaiting reinforcements, as events might determine.

Of the French troops destined for the fight at Ligny, Vandamme's corps had bivouacked for the night in the wood of Fleurus, with most of the cavalry and Girard's infantry division equally well advanced ; but some hours of the morning were consumed before the rear of the columns had come up from Charleroi sufficiently to debouch from the wood and take up position before the town. During this operation Napoleon rode along the line of vedettes, reconnoitring the enemy's dispositions, after which he prepared his orders for the advance and assigned to each corps its place in the line of battle. The light troops now moved upon Fleurus and occupied it without resistance from the Prussian cavalry outposts, which, under a fire of French artillery, fell back as far as the Tombe de Ligny ; and the main body of the French army moved to the designated points of attack. The left column, which was to take St. Amand, and was drawn up facing the western side of that village, consisted of Vandamme's (3d) corps d'armée, with Girard's division of Reille's corps in prolongation of its left, and Domont's light-cavalry division on the extreme left flank. The centre was held by Gérard's (4th) corps, and formed upon the heights fronting Ligny between that village and the Fleurus highroad, its left near the

11 A.M.

11-12 M.

12 M.

Tombe de Ligny and its right at an eminence near Mont Pontriaux. The right column, under Grouchy, comprised Excelmans' and Pajol's cavalry corps, and took post in the rear of Gérard's corps, but at right angles with it, so as to face up the road from Fleurus and protect Gérard from any attack from Mont Pontriaux or Tongrenelle, and also to watch the Prussian left and divert their attention from the centre; Pajol's corps also observed the old cross-road to Namur on the extreme right; and, as the villages of Boignée and Balatre were occupied by Prussian infantry, Grouchy took from Gérard's corps two infantry battalions with which to oppose them. In reserve were the Imperial Guard on the left of Fleurus, and Milhaud's cuirassiers on its right. In further reserve was Lobau's 6th corps, at this time near Charleroi. = While these dispositions were being effected Napoleon made a second careful reconnoissance of the Prussian position from the Fleurus heights, as the result of which he determined on a vigorous assault on the Prussian right—which would drive them away from the English and give him possession of the Namur road;—and he addressed to Ney the order dated 2 o'clock, informing him that the attack would begin in half an hour, and directing him to co-operate by moving from Quatre Bras upon the enemy's right and rear.⁵¹

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12 M.—2.

2 P.M.

⁵¹ "It is a remarkable fact," says Gleig, "that at the very time when the Emperor was reconnoitring Blücher and meditating these instructions, the Duke of Wellington was with Blücher at the mill of Bussy, arranging for the co-operation of the two Allied armies. So strangely is the great game of war played when masters in the art are opposed to one another: so little are

the guiding spirits on either side aware of the obstacles which are in the act of being raised to the accomplishment of their respective designs." All of which is one of those purposeless platitudes used by other writers than Mr. Gleig to fill the want of material information. The really "remarkable fact" in this case was that the three generals, looking at the same time upon the

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After some delay to get Gérard's corps up into position,

same battle-field, should all have drawn wholly erroneous conclusions. Of the party in the mill of Bussy Chesney writes, "All took the wing of Napoleon's army before them for the whole, and looked on any troops on the Quatre Bras side as a mere detachment. In accordance with this view we find Blücher (as honest-minded a writer in such matters as any in modern history), reporting the army that attacked him as consisting of 130,000 men, that being in fact the estimate of the Grand Army previously gained through spies, and supposed by him to be more accurate than any guess made by a distant and partly smoke-covered view." It was thus that Wellington, in turn, imagined that Ney could oppose to him no such resistance as would prevent his succouring Blücher, and left him doubtful only as to the manner in which Blücher had opposed his troops to the enemy's artillery fire (see note 33, page 60). Napoleon, on his part, erred first in his conclusion that the Prussians were drawn up in a position perpendicular to the Namur road, with their right flank left uncovered in anticipation of the English coming up. He also made no allowance for the presence of Thielmann's corps, although it was

in the act of taking its position at the time he made his reconnoissance. He had previously written to Grouchy, "The Prussians are not able to bring more than 40,000 men against us:" he now put aside the assurances of Vandamme and others that the mass of the Prussian army was in the field; and he wrote to Ney, after the reconnoissance, at 2 o'clock, describing the force before him as only "*un corps de troupes*," whom he could so readily dispose of that he purposed being at Brussels next morning, with his army. Charras notes a coincidence very different from Gleig's inane platitude. After mentioning Wellington's undertaking to support Blücher, and thus turn Napoleon's flank, he continues—"Remarkable coincidence! Blücher and Wellington agree upon a manœuvre which was the counterpart of that which Napoleon had prescribed to Ney some hours before, and was about to enjoin upon him anew—recommending him to operate as rapidly as possible with the mass of his troops.—But Wellington was about to fail Blücher, as Ney was Napoleon. On either side the lost time could not be retrieved."—The strength of the armies in the battle of Ligny was:

	FRENCH			PRUSSIANS
	With Napoleon	Lobau's Corps	Total	
Infantry . . .	40,985	9,900	50,885	73,030
Cavalry . . .	13,100	—	13,100	8,150
Artillery . . .	5,926	1,292	7,218	3,437
Total . . .	60,011	11,192	71,203	84,617
Guns . . .	204	38	242	224

Napoleon ordered the attack upon St. Amand and Ligny.⁵²

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2.30 P.M.

Vandamme, on the French left, directed Lefol's division, in three columns, to carry St. Amand; and the charge was successful, the superior numbers of the French sweeping out of the village the three Prussian battalions that occupied it, in spite of their stout resistance and of reinforcements sent them by Gen. von Steinmetz from the rear of the village. But when the French, pressing through, attempted to debouch from the outlets on the side toward Ligny, they encountered a storm of grape and canister from batteries in their front that threw them into disorder, and four fresh battalions of Prussians charged them and succeeded in holding the lower part of the village, the French remaining in the higher portion. By this time the cannonade, which

These figures are Siborne's. Chesney, following Thiers, gives the French a larger force, calling the troops with Napoleon 64,000, exclusive of 5,000 non-combatants of the train, and of 10,000 in Lobau's corps, which was not engaged on this day. From the Prussian strength should be deducted 1,200—according to Chesney 2,000—for the losses of Zieten's corps during the retreat on June 15. The loss of the French on that day was inconsiderable.

⁵² The time at which the battle began is thus fixed by Hooper:—"It is recorded that the quiet of the sultry summer noon was broken by the clang of the bell in the church tower of St. Amand striking half-past 2. Three cannon shots in quick but measured succession, fired near Fleurus, next broke the stillness—the signal for Vandamme to fall on." Cust, making the same assertion, further states that the church clock

struck "just as Ney's guns first sounded from the side of Quatre Bras." Thus the two battles would appear to have begun simultaneously. But Jomini, in his *Life of Napoleon*, makes the Emperor say, in speaking of the condition of things at Ligny at 5.30 P.M., "I was becoming impatient at hearing nothing of the movements prescribed to Ney, nor of his operations at Quatre Bras, for the noise of a violent cannonade and the direction of the wind had prevented me from hearing his attack." And on a subsequent page, he says, "Ney . . . did not reach his position [before Quatre Bras] till 2 o'clock, . . . and for the first hour engaged the enemy in skirmishes; but at 3 o'clock, hearing the cannonade at St. Amand, he took the resolution to make a serious attack upon the Allies." (See note 35, page 64.)

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had commenced with the batteries covering Vandamme's advance, had extended all along the lines of both armies and become tremendous, the Prussians firing from the heights between St. Amand and Ligny over the villages and upon the enemy's ranks beyond, while the French guns, from their more elevated position and most effectively served, swept away the Prussian reinforcements as they approached the villages or showed themselves on their edges. A renewed attack by Vandamme dislodged the Prussians who had still held their ground, and Steinmetz was compelled to withdraw his brigade—which had already lost 46 officers and 2,300 men—to a position between Bry and Sombreffe. Thenceforth St. Amand remained in the hands of the French.= The conflict which during this time took place at Ligny was even more furious but less decisive. The first outbreak of the French artillery seemed to destroy all before it; and the defenders sought shelter behind stone walls and in hollow ways, until they saw Gérard's columns of attack emerging from the smoke clouds on the opposite heights. Immediately the Prussian skirmishers lined the outer enclosures on the eastern face of the village, and a Prussian column, rapidly deploying, shook the advancing mass by a volley of musketry, and completed its disorder by their well-sustained fire. Twice was this attack repeated by the same assailing column, with the same result; then a second French column moved upon the centre of the village, and a third against its northern end; but nowhere could they effect an entrance, and they drew off to prepare for another assault and to give place to a renewed torrent of fire from the batteries.⁵³=In the eastern part of the field

⁵³ Erckmann-Chatrian's *Waterloo* gives both a graphic and a singularly exact account of the doings of the troops that attacked the village of

the battle was not urged with much vigour, there being only a succession of indecisive disputes between

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Ligny. The hero serves in a light infantry division of Gérard's corps, one of those which had bivouacked near Fleurus the night before, and were halted near it when the Emperor arrived. "A murmur ran through the whole division—'There he is!' He was on horseback, and only accompanied by a few of the officers of his staff. . . . He entered Fleurus by the highroad, and remained in the village more than an hour while we were roasting in the grain fields." They march to the right and halt again beside the windmill of Fleurus, described by Thiers. "We had hardly halted when the Emperor came out of this mill with three or four generals and two old peasants in blouses holding their cotton caps in their hands. The whole division commenced to shout, '*Vive l'Empereur!*' I saw him plainly as he came along a path in front of the battalion, with his head bent down and his hands behind his back, listening to the old bald peasant. . . . He had grown much stouter than when he was at Leipzig, and looked yellow. If it had not been for his gray coat and his hat, I should hardly have recognised him. His cheeks were sunken and he looked much older. . . . General Gérard, who had recognized him, came up at a gallop. He turned round for two seconds to listen to him, and then both went into Fleurus. Still we waited! About 2 o'clock General Gérard returned, and our line was obliged a third time more to the right. . . . The attacking columns were formed just as the clock struck 3; I was in the one on the left, which

moved first at a quick step along a winding road. . . . All went smoothly until we reached a point where the road was cut through a little elevation and then ran down to the village. As we passed through between these little hills, covered with grain, and caught sight of the nearest house, a veritable hail of balls fell upon the head of the column with a frightful noise. From every hole in the old ruin, from all the windows and loopholes in the houses, from the hedges and orchards and from above the stone walls, the muskets showered their deadly fire upon us like lightning. At the same time a battery of fifteen pieces which had been for that very purpose placed in a field in the rear of the great tower at the left of and higher up than Ligny, near the windmill, opened upon us with a roar, compared with which that of the musketry was nothing. Those who had unfortunately passed the cut in the road fell over each other in heaps in the smoke. . . . The column set off again at a run and threw itself into the road that led down the hill across the hedges. From the palisades and the walls behind which the Prussians were in ambush, they continued to pour their musketry fire upon us. But woe to every one we encountered! they defended themselves with the desperation of wolves, but a few blows from a musket or a bayonet-thrust soon stretched them out in some corner. A great number of old soldiers with gray mustaches had secured their retreat, and retired in good order, turning to fire a last shot, and then slipped through a breach or shut a

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Grouchy's and Thielmann's corps for the possession of Boignée and the parts of Tongrines lying in the valley. It formed no part of Napoleon's plan at this time to push the battle on the Prussian left.= Among the western villages, however, the contest proceeded. The French held St. Amand, but were effectually stopped by Zieten's batteries from emerging on its inner side. St. Amand la Haye was taken by Girard's division, which Blücher directed Pirch II to dislodge with his brigade, while at the same time he combined a considerable force to hold Wagnelé, which was an important point, as its possession at once secured his right flank and his communication with Wellington. Pirch moved from the heights of Bry upon St. Amand la Haye, but whole ranks of his men were carried off by the French artillery fire before they could reach it, and a sharp musketry fire greeted their entrance; and though they penetrated far into the village and were supported there by reinforcements from their rear, no efforts could drive the French out of a large walled building which formed a sort of link between this village and that of St. Amand. In the desperate struggle that ensued Gen. Girard, who directed it, fell mortally wounded; but the Prussians, utterly disordered and hard pressed, were compelled to withdraw and re-form for a fresh attack. This was arranged by

door. We followed them without hesitation; we had neither prudence nor mercy. . . . From the well-barricaded cottages they still poured their fire upon us. In ten minutes more we should have been exterminated to the last man: seeing this, the column turned down the hill again; drummers and sappers, officers and soldiers, pell-mell, all went without once turning their heads to look

back. I jumped over the palisades where I should have thought it impossible at any other time, with my knapsack and cartridge-box at my back; the others followed my example, and we all tumbled in a heap like a falling wall. Once in the road again between the hills, we stopped to breathe. . . . All this did not take ten minutes."

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Blücher himself, who was so much impressed with the importance of securing the western cluster of villages and directing from them a general assault upon the enemy's left flank, that he now repaired to this part of the field and remained there, summoning up fresh troops to fill the places of those who had fallen, and pouring battalion after battalion into the villages, until the crisis of the battle called him elsewhere. Tippelskirchen's brigade was formed along the old Roman road ready to advance upon the rear of Wagnelé, and on its left was Jürgass' cavalry, prepared to charge into the opening between Wagnelé and St. Amand la Haye should the French debouch in that direction, when Blücher galloped up to the leading battalions of Pirch II and vehemently ordered them to take St. Amand la Haye. "Children," said he, "bear yourselves bravely! Let not 'the nation' lord it over you again! Forwards! forwards, in God's name!" (*"Kinder, haltet Euch brav! lässt die Nation nicht wieder Herr über Euch werden! Vorwärts! vorwärts, in Gottes Namen!"*) Advancing at a charging pace, with cries of "*Vorwärts!*" they entered St. Amand la Haye with a rush that rolled the French before them and beyond the bounds of the village, and were with difficulty restrained from falling upon their reserves in the rear.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Napoleon had noted from his point of observation at Fleurus the numbers Blücher was gathering against his left wing, and had detached a division and a battery of the Young Guard and Colbert's brigade of Pajol's lancers in its support. A troop of the artillery horsemen came upon a Prussian battery that covered St. Amand la Haye while its gunners were so absorbed in watching the contest for the village that they were unaware of the

enemy's approach until he was among them. In their surprise they had no weapons but their rammers and hand spikes, but with them they so belaboured the horsemen as to drive them off. = The lancers sent out on this occasion reinforced the cavalry already on the left flank to preserve communication with Ney. As a counterpoise Blücher sent two of Jürgass' cavalry regiments beyond the Roman road to support Zieten's cavalry already in that direction.

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While St. Amand la Haye was thus held by the Prussians, their simultaneous attack upon Wagnel  had failed. The Prussians entered and traversed the village successfully, but on attempting to deploy beyond it they encountered a severe fire from French skirmishers concealed in the thick high grain, and three battalions were disordered and intermingled; whereupon a French column charged them and took the village, but were checked by the Prussian artillery fire and infantry reserves when they tried to pass beyond it. Around these villages the fight continued to rage furiously, presently extending to the Hameau de St. Amand, whose position made it a key to the defence of Wagnel , St. Amand la Haye, and St. Amand; now one side, now the other got an advantage, St. Amand la Haye changing owners four times, and only St. Amand remaining constantly in the hands of the French. Both sides poured in successive reinforcements, Bl cher almost denuding his left and centre for the purpose; and both suffered terribly from the artillery, but especially the Prussians, whose approaching columns were shattered on the slopes before they could reach the point of attack.= While this struggle—indecisive from its nature so long as both opponents could continue to supply victims—was taking place in the western villages, an equally obstinate and even more desperate contest was going on in the centre.

G rard, after his first attack upon Ligny had been repelled, tried a new mode of approach. He advanced two columns simultaneously—one against the churchyard in the centre of the village, the other against its lower end, so as to turn the left flank of the defenders. Moving stealthily through the tall grain, the French skirmishers drew so near, without being perceived, that

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a sudden dash gave them possession of the outer gardens and enclosures, where they were quickly joined by the battalions following. A hand-to-hand conflict ensued, in which the Prussians of Henkel's brigade were outnumbered and outflanked, and at first gave ground; but they were presently rallied by their officers and faced the enemy, while new troops came up on either side through the fire of the batteries. The struggle became intensely exciting — shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" mingling with those of "*Vorwärts!*" the incessant rattling of musketry with the roar of cannon and crashing of shot, while the grandeur of the scene was completed by the flames and columns of smoke that broke forth from the burning Castle of Ligny. The Prussians succeeded in holding their own; then they began gaining ground; then came reinforcements from Jagow's brigade, before whose furious onset the French gave way and were driven out of the village, leaving two of their guns behind them. Encouraged by this success, a Prussian column was formed and advanced from the village to attack the enemy; but just as they emerged from the streets they encountered several battalions in column moving upon them. The Prussians had no room to deploy, and the French were impatient of the delay; and for half an hour a musketry fire ensued, causing much loss on both sides. Supports for the defenders were hurrying up through the village, when an alarm was spread that the French had carried the churchyard in their rear, and musket shots were heard in that direction. Confused by the unexpected firing in this direction, and disordered by a blast of grape from a French battery in their front, the Prussians fell back into the streets, and the French, now reinforced, poured in after them. "The fight throughout the whole village of Ligny was now at the hottest: the place was literally

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crammed with the combatants, and its streets and enclosures were choked up with the wounded, the dying, and the dead: every house that escaped being set on fire was the scene of a desperate struggle: the troops fought no longer in combined order, but in numerous and irregular groups, separated by houses either in flames or held as little forts, sometimes by one and sometimes by the other party: and in various instances, when their ammunition failed or when they found themselves suddenly assailed from different sides, the bayonet and even the butt supplied them with the ready means for prosecuting the dreadful carnage with unmitigated fury. The entire village was concealed in smoke; but the incessant rattle of the musketry, the crashing of burning timbers, the smashing of doors and gateways, the yells and imprecations of the combatants, which were heard through that misty veil, gave ample indication to the troops posted in reserve upon the heights of the fierce and savage nature of the struggle beneath. In the meantime the relieving batteries on the Prussian side, which had arrived quite fresh from the rear, came into full play, as did also a reinforcement on the French side from the artillery of the Imperial Guard. The earth now trembled under the tremendous cannonade; and as the flames issuing from the numerous burning houses, intermingled with dense volumes of smoke, shot directly upward through the light-grey mass which rendered the village indistinguishable, and seemed continually to thicken, the scene resembled for a time some violent convulsion of nature rather than a human conflict—as if the valley had been rent asunder, and Ligny had become the focus of a burning crater.”⁵⁵ Thus the battle raged for hours, horribly destructive, but with

⁵⁵ This quotation and others following are from Siborne.

nothing determinate about it,—Blücher sending into the village the brigades of Krafft and Langen to aid what remained of those of Henkel and Jagow, who had gone before them; and the French adding new assailants in like manner, until they had filled and to a certain extent held the part of Ligny on the eastern side of the stream, while that on the west was mostly in the hands of the Prussians. = In the western villages similar struggles were going on. Blücher was looking most anxiously for the coming of either Wellington or Bülow, cheering on his men as they went into the contest with the cry, “Forward, lads! we must do something before the English join us!” For hours he had thus been drawing upon his reserves, until there remained to him but a single intact brigade, Von Borke’s, which he had refrained from moving because it would leave his centre bare. This state of things Napoleon had carefully watched from the Fleurus heights; and he now prepared to deal the blow that should determine the battle.

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At Fleurus the Emperor had kept with him in reserve the Imperial Guard, nearly 20,000 strong, and Milhaud’s corps of heavy cavalry, eight regiments of cuirassiers. This force—an army in itself, and as yet perfectly fresh—he made ready to hurl upon the depleted centre of the enemy, who was now fully occupied with the struggle in the villages. To conceal the movement, he advanced his reserves behind inequalities of the ground that hid them from view and in the rear of Gérard’s corps; and he removed a portion of Gérard’s batteries in order to persuade the enemy that the attack was languishing in that part of the field. The Guard were in full march for the passage over the stream of the Ligny at the northern end of the village, when a sudden order from the Emperor brought them to a halt.

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He had just been warned by Vandamme, through successive messages, that a heavy column of all arms was marching upon the French left-rear, that Girard's division had been obliged to withdraw from the attack on the villages to show a front to the new comers, and that, unless the reserves could be so disposed as to arrest their advance, his own corps must evacuate St. Amand. Napoleon was equally surprised. He anticipated no arrival of troops, except from Ney's force, which would move either from Gosselies upon St. Amand or from Quatre Bras upon Bry—that is, upon the Prussian right and rear; and the direction whence the new column came was such that it seemed to be a diversion in Blücher's favour by Wellington, who must have secured some advantage over Ney. Hence he arrested his own grand attack and sent out aides-de-camp to reconnoitre the intruders. Blücher was no less confused. The movements of the Guard had been so masked as to appear like a retreat, and the report that Gérard was withdrawing his guns so confirmed this impression that the Prussian Marshal was collecting every disposable battalion for a general onset upon the French left. Suddenly this new column appeared, and presently threw out from its left flank a body of cavalry, with artillery, that skirmished with the cavalry of the extreme Prussian right, near Mellet, west of the Roman road; and, as the result of this skirmish, prisoners were soon brought in from whom it was learned that a whole French corps, D'Erlon's, was at hand. Of a sudden—to increase the perplexity of the thing—the column was seen to halt, to remain as if undecided, and then to withdraw whence it had come. D'Erlon had been overtaken by Ney's peremptory order recalling him to Quatre Bras, and just after was joined by the Emperor's aide-de-camp, who informed him that his presence in this

part of the field was unlooked for and that there were no orders for him; so the 1st corps was marched back to join Ney.⁵⁶ To Blücher this turn of events, though unaccountable, was most welcome, and he went on collecting forces for the attack on the French left. This was not lost upon Napoleon, who had been reassured by his aide-de-camp's return from D'Erlon; and, willing to have Blücher draw as heavily upon the strength of his centre as he would, he still deferred ordering the advance of the Guard. = During this interruption of events on the west of the battle, Thielmann on the Prussian left had taken the supposed slackening of Gérard's efforts against Ligny as a favourable opportunity for moving upon the French right. He pushed forward his single remaining cavalry brigade and a horse-battery along the Fleurus road toward the bridge over the Ligny, and an artillery combat began with Grouchy's batteries on the opposite heights. Other Prussian guns came forward, supported by dragoons, which the French opposed by planting two guns upon the highroad, while two regiments of Excelmans' cavalry charged from the eastern side of the road, routed, and pursued the Prussians, capturing one of their batteries, and following them toward Point-du-Jour. But Prussian infantry now lined the walls and bridges along the western side of the Fleurus road and occupied Mont Pontriau in force, while their artillery on the Tongrines heights and near Tongrenelle opened upon the French, who, thus menaced in front and on both flanks, withdrew from

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⁵⁶ The facts stated in the text, together with those already given in note 46, p. 84, complete the story of D'Erlon's false march, which lost the battle of Quatre Bras, and of which Ney wrote to the Minister of War (June 25), "Twenty-five or

thirty thousand men were, I may say, paralysed; and were idly paraded during the whole of the battle from the right to the left, and from the left to the right, without firing a shot."

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this part of the field. = In the villages, meanwhile, neither French nor Prussians knew what was going on outside, but continued their bloody work without cessation. "The exhaustion of the Prussian troops was becoming more manifest every moment. Several officers and men, overcome by long-continued exertion, were seen to fall solely from excessive fatigue. No kind of warfare can be conceived more harassing to the combatants than was the protracted contest in the villages which skirted the front of the Prussian position. It partook also of a savage and relentless character. The animosity and exasperation of both parties were uncontrollable. Innumerable individual combats took place. Every house, every court, every wall was the scene of a desperate conflict. Streets were alternately won and lost. An ungovernable fury seized upon the combatants on both sides as they rushed wildly forward to relieve their comrades exhausted by their exertions in the deadly strife,—a strife in which every individual appeared eager to seek out an opponent, from whose death he might derive some alleviation to the thirst of hatred and revenge by which he was so powerfully excited. Hence no quarter was asked or granted by either party."⁵⁷

⁵⁷ A yet more vivid conception of these scenes than Siborne gives in the spirited passage quoted above is embodied in the individual experience of the conscript of Erckmann-Chatrian. After the repulse of his column in its first attack on Ligny, it is ordered to the second attack. "The Prussian bullets swept us away by dozens, and shot fell like hail, and the drums kept up their 'pan-pan-pan.' We said nothing, heard nothing, as we crossed the orchard, nobody paid any attention to those who fell, and in two minutes after

we entered the village, broke in the doors with the butts of our muskets, while the Prussians fired upon us from the windows. It was a thousand times worse indoors, because the yells of rage mingled in the uproar; on we rushed into the houses with fixed bayonets and massacred each other without mercy. On every side the cry rose, 'No quarter!' . . . We rushed into a large room already filled with soldiers, on the first floor of a house; it was dark, as they had covered the windows with sacks of earth, but we

Thus this wasting village fight went on. Both Gérard and Vandamme had appealed to Napoleon for reinforcements: as night was coming on Krafft notified Gneisenau that the Prussians in Ligny could not hold out much longer, and was answered that the village must be maintained, at whatever sacrifice, for half an hour more; and about the same time Pirch II. sent a messenger

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could see a steep wooden stairway at one end, down which the blood was running. We heard musket-shots from above, and the flashes each moment showed us five or six of our men sunk in a heap against the balustrade, with their arms hanging down, and the others running over their bodies with their bayonets fixed, trying to force their way into the loft. . . . An old fellow covered with wounds succeeded in reaching the top of the stairs under the bayonets. As he gained the loft he let go his musket and seized the balustrade with both hands. Two balls from muskets touching his breast did not make him let go his hold. Three or four others rushed up behind him, striving each to be first, and leaped over the top stairs into the loft above. Then followed such an uproar as is impossible to describe; shots followed each other in quick succession, and the shouts and trampling of feet made us think the house was coming down over our heads. Others followed, and when I reached the scene . . . the room was full of dead and wounded men, the walls splashed with blood, and not a Prussian was left on his feet. Five or six of our men were supporting themselves against the different pieces of furniture, smiling ferociously. Nearly all of them had balls or bayonet thrusts in their bodies, but

the pleasure of revenge was greater than the pain of their wounds." They presently go out into the street. "The fight at the bridge continued. The old church clock strikes five. We had destroyed all the Prussians on this side of the stream, except those who were in ambush in the great old ruin on the left, which was full of holes. It had been set on fire at the top by our howitzers, but the fire continued from the lower storeys, and we were obliged to avoid it." They are driven, fifteen of them, into the loft of a barn, where the Prussians roll in a bomb below and explode it: six survive and seek another stronghold. "It was about half-past six, and the combat at St. Amand seemed to grow fiercer than ever. Blücher had moved his forces to that side, and it was a favourable moment to carry the other part of the village. . . . The houses on either side of the brook were filled with troops, the French on the right, the Prussians on the left. . . . It was about seven o'clock and near sunset; the shadows of the houses on our side reached quite to the brook, while those occupied by the Prussians were still in the sunlight, as well as the hillside of Bry, down which we could see the fresh troops coming on the run. The cannonade had never been so fierce as at this moment from our side."

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from St. Amand la Haye to tell Blücher that his brigade had exhausted all its ammunition, even that in the pouches of the dead; to which the Prince—who was now completing his arrangements for falling upon the flank of the French—rejoined that the 2d brigade must not only keep its ground but attack the enemy with the bayonet. It was now that Napoleon, seeing the space behind Ligny left bare of Prussian troops, said to Gérard, “They are lost: they have no reserve remaining;” and he issued the orders for delivering that final attack which the apparition of D’Erlon had suspended.⁵⁸

8.30 P.M.

The attack was opened by the rapid advance of several batteries of the artillery of the Guard, which directed a tremendous fire upon the Prussians within and in rear of Ligny; and under its cover Gérard led his remaining troops to support their comrades in the village and to dislodge the Prussians from the part of it across the stream. The latter were giving way before this renewed attack, and a body of infantry moved to their relief. As the Prussians were marching, “they suddenly perceived, on the French right of the village, a column issuing from under the heavy smoke that rolled away from the well-served batteries which had so unexpectedly opened upon them, and which continued so fearfully to thin their ranks; and, as the mass rapidly advanced down the slope with the evident design of forcing a passage across the valley, they could not fail to distinguish, both by its well-sustained order and compactness and by its dark waving surface of bear-skins,

⁵⁸ It is of this period during which the Guard had remained halted that Charras relates this incident:—“General Rognet, second colonel of the grenadiers, collected the officers and sub-officers, and said to them,

‘Notify the grenadiers that the first who brings in a Prussian prisoner shall be shot!’ Ferocious words!” comments Charras, “for which, two days later, there were to be ferocious reprisals.”

that they had now to contend against the redoubtable Imperial Guard." The Prussians, however, showed no irresolution. Seeing that Ligny was turned, instead of seeking to enter it, they prepared to secure an orderly retreat for its defenders—an operation which would be facilitated under cover of the rapidly increasing darkness and the rain which had now set in. They even advanced against the Guard, as if to check its progress, but were charged in flank by Milhaud's corps of cuirassiers, who came up at this moment by the western side of Ligny; yet the stand they made, seconded by two squadrons of Westphalian Landwehr cavalry, enabled the troops in Ligny to withdraw in squares in the direction of Bry, defying the efforts of the French to scatter them. All the Prussian cavalry at hand—three regiments of Zieten's corps—were hurried to the menaced point. They were numerous enough to encounter the French horse, and were bravely led; but in the confusion caused by the sudden attack and the darkness, their efforts were unavailing, and two successive charges failed. Blücher by this time had arrived—sending as he came an aide-de-camp, Major Winterfeldt, to notify Wellington that he was forced to retreat;⁵⁹—and put

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⁵⁹ Winterfeldt, bearing Blücher's message, got as far as Piermont on his way to Quatre Bras, when he was shot down by Ney's skirmishers, and in the darkness he lay some time between their fire and that of the English before the latter rescued him. The wounded man considered his message too important to be confided to a subordinate, and desired the officer who came to assist him to send for the nearest officer of rank. Müffling in the course of the evening was informed that an aide-de-camp had been wounded, but seems to

have treated the matter as of too little moment to require looking after. Hence Wellington's ignorance until next morning of the result of the action at Ligny—for which English writers used to censure Blücher or Gneisenau. It would seem that the fault lay in the general slackness or inertia in the British army system. But Chesney holds it to be a "mistake," for which "we may censure Müffling himself, or possibly the stiffness of character which first took Major Winterfeldt unnecessarily near the line of French skirmishers, and, when

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himself at the head of his cavalry to lead a third charge, designed to throw the French back into the valley. The old hussar's gallantry proved ineffectual, for the French again held their ground; and as the cuirassiers rapidly pursued him when he withdrew his forces to rally, his horse was killed under him, and the sturdy old man fell, disabled for the day.⁶⁰ Further hostilities on

wounded by his own temerity, made him keep the message close." = It may be added here that Wellington's regular channel of communication with Blücher also was interrupted; for Gen. Hardinge, the British representative at Prussian headquarters, had received during the action a wound, which cost him his left hand. Gleig, indeed, states that the Duke "learned after nightfall, from a short note written by Hardinge while he lay mutilated in a cottage, that the Prussians were over-matched." Brialmont gives a more probable story than Gleig's—that Sir Henry Hardinge, after being wounded, "sent by his brother, a captain of artillery, his last report—a verbal one—which reached the Duke just as darkness was closing in. Up to that moment," adds Brialmont, "Wellington had been able to follow, with his glass, the main incidents in the battle." He was without further precise information until it was obtained by his own patrols next morning.

⁶⁰ "The Prince's fine gray charger," says Siborne,—“a present from the Prince Regent of England—was mortally wounded by a shot, in the left side, near the saddle-girth. On experiencing a check to his speed, Blücher spurred, when the animal, still obedient to the impulse of its

gallant master, made a few convulsive plunges forward; but on finding that his steed was rapidly losing strength, and perceiving at the same time the near approach of the cuirassiers, he cried out to his aide-de-camp, 'Nostitz, now I am lost!' At that moment the horse fell from exhaustion, rolling upon his right side, and half burying its rider under its weight." Count Nostitz jumped from his horse, which was also wounded, and, holding its bridle in his left hand, and his sword in his right, stood ready to defend his general. The pursuers swept past, so close that one of them clashed against the standing horse, but in the rush and the darkness never noticed the fallen man or his companion. Presently the Prussians rallied and drove back the French over the same ground. As the trampling of hoofs approached, Nostitz threw a cloak over the Marshal, and, when the French had again dashed by them, succeeded in grasping the bridle of one of the pursuing Prussian Uhlans and arresting some of the files following. Five or six troopers by main force raised the body of the dead horse, while others raised Blücher, senseless and immovable, got him upon a horse, and—just in time to escape a charge of the again advancing French—delivered him to

the part of the Prussians were limited to movements calculated to secure the retirement of broken divisions and battalions to the rear. Enough troops remained in good condition to show a firm front at Bry and at Sombrefte, and to hold the road connecting them. On the Prussian extreme left, before the angle of the roads at Point-du-Jour, Thielmann, whose corps had suffered least, even assumed the offensive,—holding Mont Pontiaux in force while the Prussians were crossing the stream of the Ligny in its front, and repelling the advance of Lobau's corps, which had come up from its position in reserve and showed itself in this part of the field at the close of the battle. Thus nothing in the nature of a rout took place at any point in the Prussian line; and adequate rearguards held the Namur-Nivelles road from Marbais to Point-du-Jour, covering the general retreat which at once began. The French attempted no pursuit. Napoleon went back to Fleurus for the night. His troops rested in their bivouacs—Vandamme's corps (the 3d) in advance of St. Amand, Gérard's (the 4th) in front of Ligny, the Imperial Guard upon the heights before Bry, Grouchy's cavalry before Sombrefte, and Lobau's corps in rear of Ligny.⁶¹

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the care of the nearest body of infantry, who bore him to the rear. = For the present Blücher was completely *hors de combat*—perhaps indeed fortunately for the Allied cause, since, in accordance with the wise forecast of the Prussian King, the conduct of the retreat now devolved upon Gneisenau.

⁶¹ The loss of the Prussians in the battle of Ligny is stated by Siborne at about 12,000 killed and wounded, that of the French between 7,000 and 8,000. The French captured 21 guns. Few prisoners were

taken on either side. Thiers makes the Prussian loss in killed and wounded 18,000, and by desertion 12,000 more. The Rev. Mr. Abbott, improving again upon Thiers, says that "the Prussians, leaving 10,000 prisoners in his hands, and 20,000 weltering in blood, fled, as they had ever been accustomed to do, before the genius of Napoleon." Thiers, describing Napoleon's customary ride over the battle-field next morning, says, "Within St. Amand the number of slain was pretty equally divided between the French and Prussians,

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The Prussians were the only ones of the combatants at Ligny or Quatre Bras who showed any activity during the night,—Napoleon's and Ney's French, as well as Wellington's British and Netherlanders, reposing quietly until daybreak. The Prussians availed themselves of the cover of darkness to the utmost. Before the battle

but all the bodies beyond the stream were clad in the Prussian uniform. . . . The rising ground behind, as far as the Mill of Bry, where the artillery of the Guard had attacked the Prussian reserve *en écharpe*, was strewn with the bodies of men and horses, mingled with broken cannon. . . . But at Ligny the scene was fearful. There the combat had taken place in the village itself, where men had fought hand to hand with all the animosity of civil strife. The number of the slaughtered Prussians and French was equal, and, save their lifeless bodies, no human form was to be seen, all the inhabitants having fled from their homes.

. . . In leaving Ligny and ascending the ground where the Imperial Guard had decided the victory, the slain were almost exclusively Prussians, or, in making a sad comparison, we may say that there were two or three Prussians to one Frenchman." Erckmann-Chatrian's conscript pictures the scene at Ligny in horrible detail: "We were then distributed in squads to superintend the removal of the wounded. Several detachments of chasseurs were ordered to escort the convoys to Fleurus, as there was no room for them at Ligny; the church was already filled with the poor fellows. We did not select those to be removed; the surgeons did that, as we could hardly distinguish in numbers of cases be-

tween the living and the dead. We only laid them on the straw in the carts. . . . I was astonished that so many of us had escaped in the carnage, which had been far greater than at Lützen, or even at Leipzig. The battle had only lasted five hours, and the dead in many places were piled two or three deep. The blood flowed from under them in streams. Through the principal street, where the artillery went, the mud was red with blood, and the mud itself was crushed bones and flesh. . . . At Fleurus we were obliged to separate the French and the Prussians, because they would rise from their beds or their bundles of straw, to tear each other to pieces."—The desertions from the Prussian army took place, Siborne says, "amongst the newly-raised drafts from the Rhenish and Westphalian provinces, and from the Duchy of Berg. Of these troops, 8,000 men betook themselves to a flight, which admitted of no check until they reached Liège and Aix-la-Chapelle. Among the Rhenish troops, particularly those from provinces which had formerly belonged to France, there were many old French soldiers; and although some of them fought with great bravery, others evinced a bad disposition, and there were instances in which they passed over to their former companions in arms."

had ceased orders were sent to the several corps, designating their respective lines of retreat. Gneisenau had taken the command the moment he learned of Blücher's fall,⁶² and at once directed the withdrawal of the army northward to Wavre, under cover of the troops drawn up before the Namur road. Gen. Von Jagow occupied Bry until all troops in the western part of the field had passed to the rear, when he withdrew to Marbais, and, joining Pirch's brigade at that point, proceeded to Tilly. Thielmann's brigades and outposts were so widely detached that it was long before he could set his columns in motion from the position he had held throughout the battle, and the sun had risen when his rearguard marched. By morning Zieten's and Pirch's corps had collected at Tilly and Gentinnes, while Bülow, who had come up thus far at nightfall, lay near by at Gembloux. Thus there remained in the presence of the enemy only a rear guard of cavalry and artillery, which continued in observation during most of the next day. Col. Von Röhl, who superintended the ordnance department of the army, had been equally prompt in removing the park of reserve ammunition from Gembloux to Wavre, whither he at once repaired to be ready to put the artillery in order for action as rapidly as it should arrive,—while before day couriers

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⁶² Blücher was carried from the field to Gentinnes, some six miles in the rear, where surgical aid was procured. His whole frame had received a severe shock, which for a time stupefied him; but vigorous rubbing with brandy proved so efficacious that the Marshal presently recovered sufficiently to demand an application of the same remedy internally. This the doctor refused, but was obliged to compromise so

far as to allow a bottle of champagne, which revived the patient to that extent that he prepared a dispatch, and delivered it to the bearer with the message, "Tell the King that I had a cold night-drink [a "nightcap"—"*Ich hatte kalt nachgetrunken*"], and that all will end well." Next day the brave old man was again at his duties as commander, with undiminished ardour.

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were on their way to Maestricht, Cologne, Wesel, and Münster, to order up additional supplies. The Prussian army had received a defeat, and a severe one, in consequence partly of the absence of Bülow's corps, through orders imperfectly expressed on the one hand and misapprehended on the other; partly of the defective position taken up by Blücher; but especially because the old Marshal, in his headlong ardour and his eagerness to deal a telling blow against the enemy, was tempted to go beyond the defensive fight which would have served to maintain his position until darkness should have brought a respite and an accession of forces from either Wellington or Bülow, or both. But the defeat was saved from being a disaster by the admirable firmness of both officers and men; and further evil consequences to the Allied cause were averted by Gneisenau's prompt and orderly retreat upon a line parallel with that on which Wellington must retire, thus assuring that junction of the armies which Napoleon's scheme had sought to prevent.

Napoleon, as if content with his victory—his last,—made no effort whatever to grasp the advantages it offered; but left the Prussians free to pursue their own devices without molestation. The original delays in commencing the battle, aggravated by that caused by D'Erlon's inopportune appearance and retirement, had deferred the result of his finely prepared and decisive grand attack until darkness had set in; but he had then at hand the absolutely fresh corps of Lobau, while the Guard had known no fatigue until the closing moments of the action, and Grouchy had his cavalry in readiness to push on instantly. With resources such as these the Napoleon of former days would never have relinquished the pursuit of a defeated foe before it had been reduced to a rout. But, as "not a single officer

had come in from Ney, and as Lobau's were the only fresh troops that Napoleon had, the entire Guard being overcome by fatigue, he thought it better to keep them near him, since, if the enemy should again assume an offensive attitude, he had no other troops with which to oppose them."⁶³ So Napoleon left his soldiers to

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⁶³ The quotation is from Thiers, and constitutes his explanation of Napoleon's much-censured inaction. Even Thiers is constrained to say, as to the Prussians, "They ought not to have been allowed a moment's rest *next day*, but constantly pressed, so that those who had left their ranks should be entirely cut off and their army as much reduced by the pursuit as it would have been by the battle itself." Napoleon at Fleurus learned, but merely in general terms, Thiers says, "that Ney had only succeeded in arresting the progress of the English;" he then prepared the necessary orders for the morrow, and "flung himself on a bed to refresh himself by a few hours' sleep. He was up again at 5." Thiers does not state, however,—as does the Marquis de Grouchy, grandson of the Marshal, in his *Mémoires du Maréchal de Grouchy*,—that Grouchy had prepared for the pursuit, as a matter of course, and held his horsemen waiting orders. Learning, to his surprise, that the Emperor had left the field without issuing any instructions for his right wing, Grouchy followed him to Fleurus, where, instead of obtaining orders, he was told that Napoleon was ill and asleep, and none of his staff dared waken him. Soult, the Major-General, refused to take the responsibility of giving any orders or even counsel, and Grouchy had no resource but to return to his

command and push out reconnoissances in its immediate vicinity. Early next morning Grouchy again repaired to Fleurus, and—notwithstanding Thiers' assertion that Napoleon was "up again at 5"—he again encountered Soult's refusal either to waken his master or to give orders; and he was compelled to wait until 8 o'clock before the appearance of Napoleon, who then dawdled away the rest of the morning before he would give his orders—too late, as it proved, to serve any useful purpose. = Critics more competent than Thiers have recognised Napoleon's culpability in not pushing the Prussian retreat instantly. Thus, Jomini, in his *Life of Napoleon*, states that when D'Erlon was peremptorily recalled by Ney, he left "the division of Durutte between Villers-Peruin and St. Amand, to co-operate if necessary on Bry." Then he puts into Napoleon's mouth this apology for his inaction—"I did not know that Durutte passed the night on the flank of the Prussian line of retreat, so near that his advanced guards heard distinctly the noise caused by the march of their train and the confusion of their columns. Had I known this, I should have pushed these troops forward to harass the retreat, and, in spite of the darkness of the night and the failure of the intended co-operation [by Ney], I might have gained much

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their rest, and returned to Fleurus for the night, and thus let slip his last opportunity to destroy his enemies in detail.

On the Quatre Bras side of the field Ney had nothing to do but maintain his present position until he should receive further orders and be informed what the result had been at Ligny and what the Emperor next intended. Although deprived in the day's fight of five of the eight infantry divisions which had been promised him, he had succeeded in holding back the English from aiding their allies—which, perhaps, was quite as much as he could advantageously have attempted in any case, since the movement upon Blücher's rear which Napoleon

by a well-regulated night pursuit."

= Charras follows out this idea.

Having remarked that the results of Ligny were considerable, though dearly paid for, he continues, "But, considerable as they were, they should have been *complete* to meet the exigencies of Napoleon's situation. The aim of the French general . . . was to prevent the junction of Blücher and Wellington; and, so far, nothing indicated that this had been attained." A man of Blücher's known temperament, Charras urges, was certain to fall back in such a direction as to join his ally; "and, if he effected this, the plan of the French general was ruined from its foundation." He points out the grave error of not attacking early in the morning—at the time, that is, when Reille found Napoleon prostrated at Charleroi (note 31, page 57),—when Blücher had only Zieten's corps and 3 of Thielmann's divisions, and must either have been driven off toward Namur, or have had his army "put beyond the condition of enterprising anything for a long time." He counts

as a second error the neglect to throw D'Erlon's corps, when it was at hand, upon the Prussian right, which would have been decisive. "Formerly," he says, "Napoleon would have acted altogether differently: now he was enfeebled (*faibli*). This is why the 1st corps remained useless! this is why Blücher escaped disaster!" The third error was the neglect to use Lobau's corps. Lastly, the victory, though delayed, should have been employed to cut off Blücher from joining Wellington. "This he [Napoleon] should have prevented at any cost, and he could have prevented it by a prompt, vigorous, implacable pursuit of the beaten army." = The full explanation of his failure to act in this manner is contained in the incident of Grouchy's finding him ill and in bed at Fleurus, and in such a mental condition that Soult dared not disturb him—the continuance, doubtless, of the state of depression in which Reille had found him in the morning (see note 31, page 57).

ordered him to make would have exposed his own flank to Wellington's attack, and was not to be thought of after the strength of the English began to accumulate.⁶⁴ Here the night passed quietly except for some unimportant collisions between the pickets of the two armies.

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The English during the night received considerable reinforcements, chiefly of British cavalry and the remainder of the reserve, bringing up their strength by morning to about 45,000.⁶⁵ Wellington had issued orders directing troops yet to the westward to move next day upon Quatre Bras and Genappe. He was without tidings from Ligny—owing to the neglect shown to the wounded aide-de-camp who bore Blücher's message,—and apprehended a French success in that quarter which might sever his communication with Blücher.

⁶⁴ Charras' commentary upon Ney's work for this day is as follows:—"Deprived of the aid of D'Erlon and of Girard's division, Ney rendered an immense service, such as perhaps only he, with his prodigious energy, could render: he prevented Wellington from appearing on the battlefield of Ligny; he rendered vain the promise of the English general to the Prussian—the promise which had decided the latter to await the shock of Napoleon. . . . Ney could have done no more than he did; and he did immensely—it must be repeated—in preventing Wellington from carrying to Blücher a succour which would certainly have given a different issue to the battle of Ligny."

⁶⁵ The happy-go-lucky manner in which the Duke of Wellington's troops were tumbled into the field, anyhow, has appeared from the previous narrative. Chesney notes that

"he at dark, thirty hours after his first warning, had only present at Quatre Bras *three-eighths* of his infantry, *one-third* of his guns, and *one-seventh* of his cavalry. Truly," adds the critic, "in holding his own, the great Englishman owed something that day to Fortune!" Charras gives a variation of the same idea. Speaking of Wellington's deliberation on the 14th, he says, "If he had had before him the Napoleon of Italy and of Ratisbon, he would have paid dearly the next day for his prolonged sluggishness." The following observation is Chesney's: "The Allies this day, owing to Bülow's mistake and Wellington's deliberation, only brought into action forces actually less than Napoleon's army; but Napoleon's reserving Lobau, and missing D'Erlon, caused him to fight at both points of contact with inferior numbers."

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His possession of Quatre Bras, however, made his position satisfactory in any case—if Blücher had maintained his position at Ligny, he could join him there in the morning and assail Napoleon with the united armies; if Blücher had been worsted, the Duke, retiring along his own line of operations, would still unite with him between Quatre Bras and Brussels.

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The Prussians continued during the day the retreat which had been so well advanced in the night. The movement to Wavre, though it involved great present inconvenience by the sacrifice of their base of supply on the Rhine, was the only one by which the Prussians could form a junction in the first instance with Bülow's corps, and then with the English, since the conformation of the country forbade the use of any more westerly route.⁶⁶ Gneisenau therefore ordered a new line of

⁶⁶ "The natural base of supply for the Prussian army being the lower Rhine," Chesney explains, "their communication to it through the Fleurus country would turn due eastward through Namur and Liége; while that of Wellington's army, if collected in the same district, would pass northward by or near Brussels to the seaports of Antwerp and Ostend, which connected it with England. The lines would meet in fact at a right angle, the apex of which was the cross-roads of Quatre Bras. If either of the armies should begin to retire along the line which led to its respective base, it would at once be separating from the other; and every mile of retreat would give so much the larger opening between their flanks, and thus increase the chances of a French army desiring to deal singly with them. . . . It

seemed to [Napoleon] more than probable that whichever of the Allies was defeated would be naturally tempted to . . . secure his own direct retreat. He knew Blücher was too practical a soldier not to recognise the immense inconvenience which it would be, in case of prolonged hostilities, to abandon the Namur-Liége line and open a new one from Prussia to supply his army by." So assured was he of this foregone conclusion that "we find him writing his first letter to Ney on the morning of the 17th in the following positive terms: 'The Prussian army has been put to the rout; General Pajol is pursuing it on the roads to Namur and Liége.'" = Of the route by way of Wavre Chesney says, "Between the road from Gembloux to Wavre and that from Quatre Bras to Waterloo, the country is cut up by the

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supply to be opened through Louvain, and the troops to fall back upon Wavre—Zieten's and Pirch's corps by the roads through Tilly, Gentinnes, and Mont St. Guibert; Thielmann's by way of Gembloux; while Bülow was to march through Walhain and Corbaix to Dionle-Mont, within 3 miles of Wavre, and there to take a position and throw out rearguards to protect the concentrated army against the pursuit of the French. These operations were successfully accomplished without any molestation, and by nightfall the entire Prussian force was collected about Wavre—the corps of Zieten on the left (western) bank of the Dyle, those of Pirch, Thielmann, and Bülow on its right,—ready in every respect to resume offensive operations, though with but a scanty supply of food in consequence of their severed communications. One mistake was made in the disposition of the corps—the designation of Bülow's to act as the rear guard, because of its having not yet been in action, while, for the same reason, it was to lead the advance to Waterloo,—an arrangement which involved the loss of valuable hours next day. Cavalry patrols, toward evening and through the night, were pushed toward the Namur-Louvain road on the left, and on the right into the district between the Dyle and Lasne—one of the reconnoitring parties moving far enough westward to observe before nightfall the French army in its march along the Brussels road. Thus

various heads of the river Dyle, each making a deep valley with marshy meadows on the streams, and rendering military movements across the district difficult." Hence the necessity of the *détour* by way of Wavre to Waterloo. Gen. Lamarque, in his *Notice sur les Cent Jours*, says of this district, "The country offers great difficulties: one is thoroughly

astonished to find in this region high mountains, profound ravines, like the chains of the Alps and the Pyrenees, across which it would be difficult to transport artillery." Charras endorses this observation, saying that the roads which now make the country practicable have been constructed since 1815.

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Blücher felt himself justified in his characteristic response to Wellington's inquiry whether his aid might be counted upon on the morrow—"I shall not come with two corps only, but with my whole army; upon this understanding, however, that, should the French not attack us on the 18th, we shall attack them on the 19th."⁶⁷

At Quatre Bras in the early morning both English and French were at a loss to know how to act until they could get information what had taken place at Ligny. The Duke of Wellington was on horseback at dawn, and rode from Genappe to the outposts held by the cavalry that had arrived since the battle, to learn what had been ascertained at the front. From Sir Hussey Vivian, whose (6th) brigade of light cavalry was posted on the left, he found that the French had given no sign of movement, while a picket that had pushed on toward the position of the Prussians brought intelligence that they no longer occupied it. The Duke discerned through a telescope French vedettes on the plain, evidently communicating between Ney's force and Napoleon's—a circumstance, taken in connection with the disappearance of the Prussians, which suggested that Napoleon might have passed the Namur

⁶⁷ Thiers, *à propos* of Blücher's doings on this day, and especially of the letter, exclaims, "What noble and energetic patriotism in an old man of seventy-three!" Thus wrote the distinguished historian at the age of sixty-five. It is worthy of note that he was himself seventy-four years old when called to the Presidency of France in 1871, to repair a new overthrow at the hands of Prussia. = Blücher wrote also to his family as follows:—"Wavre, June 17, 1815.—Napoleon attacked me

yesterday afternoon, about 3 o'clock, with 120,000 men of the line. The fight lasted till the night. Both armies lost many men. To-day I have drawn nearer to Lord Wellington, and in a few days there will probably be another battle. . . . We shall have battles oftener till we are again in Paris. My troops fought like lions, but we were too weak. Two of my corps were not with me [?]. Now I have drawn them all to me."

road and be manœuvring upon his left and rear while Ney was to attack him in front. He therefore sent out a strong patrol of hussars along the Namur road to learn how matters stood, and observed that the French vedettes immediately signalled the movement to their rear. The patrol advanced into the close vicinity of the French outposts and heard from Gen. Zieten, who still remained at Sombreffe, both the result of the battle of Ligny and the present movements of the Prussians, and with this information it returned to Wellington. The necessity of a retreat was at once manifest; and its destination was determined by the arrival of a Prussian officer bringing from Blücher himself, who had already established his headquarters at Wavre, tidings that his army was now concentrating at that point. Wellington immediately wrote back informing Blücher of his own plans, and proposing to accept battle on the next day at the position in front of Waterloo which had been mapped out a week before,⁶⁸ if the Field-Marshal would support him with two of his corps. In the retreat which was now ordered—to the great surprise of the men and subordinate officers of the Anglo-Allied army, who knew nothing of the battle of Ligny, and supposed that their day's work would be to dispose of Ney's French in their front,—Wellington purposed retarding the pursuit by the French throughout the day, both to gain time for the necessary slow withdrawal of his main force through the winding street and narrow bridge of Genappe, and to insure the co-operation of the Prussians before a general action could be forced upon him. The movement was so far deliberate that the men were ordered in the first instance to cook their dinner, while the Duke attended to dispatches that morning received

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⁶⁸ See text, page 15.

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from England, and issued orders prescribing the line of march to be taken by his troops still lying toward the west—those under Lord Hill, at Nivelles to move directly to Waterloo, and those still farther westward to go from Enghien to Hal and remain there to cover Brussels from the south-west. The infantry first moved to the rear, their retreat being effectually masked by the outposts of cavalry and light troops still in the front; and it was not until the main body was well on its way toward Genappe and another bridge lower down the stream, that the advance line of skirmishers—who covered the front from the wood of Bossu, before Gemioncourt, and to the Namur road east of Piermont—fell back behind the cavalry. These were drawn up in two lines in the rear of the Namur road,—the light-horse forming the first line and throwing out pickets to replace the withdrawn infantry, and the heavy cavalry being in their rear. With these and the troops of horse-artillery as his rearguard, Wellington remained in position until Napoleon came up with the mass of his army and, joining Ney, made ready to press the pursuit.

11.30 A.M.

2 P.M.

Ney found himself confronted in the morning not merely by the army which had repulsed his attack the day before, but by large reinforcements, whose strength he had no means of estimating. Assuming that, if Napoleon had succeeded at Ligny, he would unite with him in a combined front-and-flank attack upon the English, but that, if the Emperor had failed, his own advance would only entangle him between the English and Prussian armies, Ney necessarily remained at rest until he could hear from Napoleon. Neither information nor orders having been furnished him, he sent to request them,⁶⁹ and received in answer a dispatch from

9 A.M.

⁶⁹ "It is difficult to believe," says Charras, "but there is no doubt

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Soult, at Fleurus, of which the following are the essential points :—"The Prussian army has been put to rout ; Gen. Pajol is in pursuit of them on the roads to Namur and Liége. . . . The Emperor is going to the mill of Bry, where the road from Namur to Quatre Bras passes ; it is possible the English army may act in your front ; in that case the Emperor will march directly upon it by the road to Quatre Bras, while you attack it in front with your divisions, which ought now to be united, and this army will be destroyed in an instant. . . . The intention of His Majesty is that you take position at Quatre Bras, in accordance with the orders given you ; but if this cannot possibly be done, send a detailed account immediately, and the Emperor will move as I have said ;—if, on the contrary, there is only a rearguard, attack it and take position. To-day is required to terminate this operation, to complete the munitions, to rally stragglers, and to call in detachments."⁷⁰ Ney had at this time before him not "only a rear guard," but the entire reinforced army of Wellington ; and he naturally awaited the promised ap-

that, at the time when Flahaut [Ney's messenger to Napoleon] quitted Frasnes, they did not know there the result of the battle of Ligny, and he brought the first news of the combat at Quatre Bras. From 9 o'clock in the evening till 9 o'clock in the morning there had been no communication between the general-in-chief and the commander of the left wing of his army, separated from one another by a distance of less than three leagues. The in-curiosity was equal on both sides."

⁷⁰ The French original of the dispatch is given in full in Siborne, Appendix XXVII. Thiers considers it sufficient to say of it that it was

"to order him [Ney] to march boldly and speedily to Quatre Bras, when the English, seeing 40,000 men advancing along the Namur road, would immediately decamp, fearing they might be taken in flank if they offered a prolonged resistance." Thiers leaves his readers in ignorance that this advance was to be made "if there is only a rearguard ;" he then proceeds to inveigh against Ney's inaction. This order Thiers says, was "given at 7 in the morning." A previous note (63, page 115), shows the impossibility of this: the following note will illustrate Thiers' trustworthiness as to hours.

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proach of the Emperor by the Namur road. So soon as he learned that the Emperor's troops were actually in motion, he commenced the advance of his own; and it was at this time that he received the following dispatch, the second on this day:—

“To M. the Marshal, Prince of Moskowa,

“4th Corps d'Armée, at Gosselies.

“Before Ligny, the 17th at noon.

“Monsieur the Marshal, the Emperor has just placed in position before Marbais one corps of infantry and the Imperial Guard; His Majesty charges me to tell you that his intention is that you shall attack the enemy at Quatre Bras, to chase them from their position, and that the corps at Marbais will second your operations; His Majesty is going to Marbais, and waits your report with impatience.

“THE MARSHAL OF THE EMPIRE, MAJOR GENERAL,

“DUKE OF DALMATIA.”⁷¹

⁷¹ This dispatch has been quoted in full as an illustration of Thiers' methods of narration. His version of the dispatch is that Napoleon “sent fresh orders to the Marshal [Ney] to advance without paying any regard to the English, whom he was to attack in flank if they resisted.” Thiers now goes on to say, “He *next* ordered Lobau to hasten his march to Quatre Bras, *and then* expedited the departure of the Guard. He was preparing to leave himself, in order to direct the movement in person, when he received a report from Gen. Pajol, who had been in pursuit of the Prussians since dawn. . . . Marshal Grouchy was with him at the moment. To him he gave his instructions verbally”—the famous instructions about which whole libraries of controversy have since arisen, but against which Grouchy expostulated at the time, only

yielding to Napoleon's reiterated arguments and positive order. Now all this—the letter to Ney, the getting off a corps of infantry and then the Guard, the receipt of Pajol's report, the determination of the orders consequent upon it, their delivery to Grouchy, and the dispute about them—all this must have taken time, scarcely less than an hour or an hour and a half. The time of the letter, which began this train of events, was “noon.” But Thiers has suppressed all reference to the time; and he tells us that, *after* the occurrence of all the things above enumerated, “Napoleon left the heights of Bry *at about eleven in the morning*, and advanced at a gallop along the highroad from Namur to Quatre Bras.” In a foot-note, indicated after the word “*morning*,” as italicised above, Thiers says, “I state these hours on the best authority. Marshal

As soon as Ney discovered the withdrawal of the English light troops, and that cavalry only were before him, he brought his own cavalry forward and held it in readiness to advance upon the Allied front simultaneously with the main body of the French army, which was now moving from Marbais along the Namur road upon its flank.

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The main body of the French about Ligny rested quietly in their bivouacs during the morning hours, awaiting orders from the Emperor to set them in motion. Their cavalry vedettes, within half a mile of Thielmann's rearguard, were unaware when it withdrew after sunrise, and no attempt was made to discover what direction the Prussians had taken until they had retired beyond observation. Then Pajol, with Soult's (4th) hussar division of his (1st) cavalry corps, undertook the pursuit; but directed it, not toward Wavre, but along the road to Namur, upon which Teste's (21st) infantry division of Lobau's (6th) corps followed in support.⁷² Grouchy, meantime, anxious to begin in

4 A.M.

Grouchy mentions others; but, as will be seen hereafter, he makes constant mistakes as to the time, and his assertions in this respect are completely erroneous." The persistent system of garbling and falsehood, by which Thiers follows Napoleon in shifting his faults upon Ney and Grouchy, cannot in every instance be pointed out within the limits of these pages. Where this narrative is in conflict with that of Thiers, its justification will be found for the most part in Chesney's exposure of the great French advocate's shameless misrepresentations.

⁷² This misdirection of the pursuit was in accordance with Napoleon's idea, as shown in his first

dispatch to Ney, already cited, that the Prussians "had been put to rout" and were flying eastward "to Namur and Liège." According to Thiers, the order to Pajol—who was under Grouchy's command—had been issued over night, at the same time as that to Ney, which is in fact dated June 17th. According to Grouchy and to his grandson's *Memoirs* of him (see note 63, page 115), all movements of the cavalry up to noon of the 17th were made by the Marshal on his own authority; since his repeated efforts to get access to the Emperor were unsuccessful until 8 A.M., and even then it was impossible to elicit from him any orders for four or five hours longer. Thiers rejects

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earnest the pursuit for which he had prepared on the evening before, went at daybreak for the second time

these statements on *à priori* grounds. "Marshal Grouchy," he says in a note devoted to the topic, "has sought to show that it was on the 17th, and not on the 18th, that time had been lost, and, in a very inexact recital, represents Napoleon as losing his time in the fashion of a talkative, idle, and irresolute prince. In this portrait we could scarcely recognise the man who had come from Elba to Paris in twenty days, who in two days had suddenly established himself between the Prussians and English, even before they had suspected his approach. Nobody will believe that Napoleon, who when he could have awaited an attack in Champagne, had boldly advanced into Belgium, that he might have an opportunity of surprising and successfully combating the armies of his enemies, had suddenly become weak and irresolute." This incredible thing, however, is precisely what Napoleon's movements on the morning of June 17th force us to believe. Napoleon's own words—suppressed by Thiers in his garbled account of the first despatch to Ney—show that he intended no vigorous work that day; for, after ordering and promising to co-operate in the movement on Quatre Bras, he continues, "*La journée d'aujourd'hui est nécessaire pour terminer cette opération, et pour compléter les munitions, rallier les militaires isolés, et faire rentrer les détachements.*" In Napoleon's front was no enemy at all; he could have seized without opposition the defile of Genappe, by which alone the English could approach the Prussians; he could thus have fallen

upon Wellington in flank and rear while Ney assailed him in front,—and thus, perhaps, have realised his plan of beating the Allies in detail. But he lost these hours, which the Allies improved to effect their junction, so that on the 17th he had already also lost the battle of the 18th. = The impression made by this idleness upon the army is embodied in the homely words of Erckmann-Chatrian's conscript:—"The Prussian rearguard had just left Sombreffe, and it was a question whether we should pursue them. Some said we ought to send out the light-horse to pick up the prisoners. But no one paid any attention to them. The Emperor knew what he was doing. But I remember that everybody was astonished notwithstanding, because it is the custom to profit by victories. The veterans had never seen anything like it. They thought the Emperor was preparing some grand stroke; that Ney had turned the enemy's line, and so forth." Charras expresses, in more elegant terms, the same thought as the conscript:—"Not to pursue the vanquished with the sword at his back, to leave him time to recover himself, to re-form, to bring up reinforcements—this was a strange thing to legions accustomed to Napoleonic tactics! 'The Napoleon whom we have known exists no more,' said Vandamme roughly to his officers; 'our yesterday's success will have no result.' Vandamme was become a railer (*frondeur*). But Gérard, wholly devoted to his chief, expressed the same thought in other terms; 'he deplored the incompre-

to Fleurus to procure orders, but was obliged to wait some hours in the anteroom, when he was informed that he was to accompany the Emperor to the scene of yesterday's battle. The Emperor rode in his carriage first to St. Amand, then over the field, and through Ligny, examining the traces of the struggle; he gave directions for the care of the wounded; he reviewed the soldiers of most of the corps, assuring them of his satisfaction with their conduct;⁷³ he addressed the Prussian wounded officers upon the past course and future policy of Prussia—producing a “scene” which, Thiers says, was “published in all the journals,” and was “calculated to calm the German passions should victory continue to smile on us for twenty-four hours longer;” he then rode to Bry, where “he conversed with his accustomed ease with his generals on various subjects,—war, politics, the different parties that divided France, Royalists and Jacobins.” He then received from a reconnoitring party intelligence that they had found the English in possession of the Quatre Bras road, and had seen no movement on the part of Ney; and upon this he dictated his second, or “noon,” dis-

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12 M.

hensible, the irremediable delays.’ The soldier saw in it the operation of some black treason which paralysed his energy, for, in his eyes, Napoleon was infallible and unwearied.” Jomini, in his *Summary of the Campaign*, treats the delay as simply inexplicable. He says, “To those who can recall the astonishing activity that presided over the events of Ratisbon in 1809, of Dresden in 1813, and of Champ-Aubert and Montmirail in 1814, this time lost on Napoleon’s part will always remain inexplicable. After a success such as he had just achieved, it seems that

at 6 in the morning he should have been upon the heels of the Prussians, or—as well—have fallen with all his forces upon Wellington. . . . Undoubtedly the Emperor had powerful motives for resigning himself to such inactivity; but these motives have never reached us.”= His malady, already described, accounts for it.

⁷³ “His mere presence delighted them,” says Thiers, “and was a sufficient recompense for all their dangers and sufferings. The time spent in gratifying and encouraging such sentiments was certainly not lost.”

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patch to Ney, ordering an advance by the Marshal, in which he would co-operate. While Napoleon was directing the advance of Lobau's corps and the Guard toward Quatre Bras, he received a report from Pajol, who had met and captured a stray Prussian battery on the Namur road and routed with loss a squadron of horse that accompanied it, but, as he had found no evidence that the main body of the Prussians had passed in this direction, had turned northward from the Namur road, as a supporting brigade of Excelmans' had previously done, finding traces of the enemy toward Gembloux. Napoleon now disclosed his plans of operation—to Grouchy he gave a force of 33,000 men, with which he was to pursue the Prussians, while with the remainder of his army he would himself join Ney and move upon the English. The instructions given by Napoleon to Grouchy were verbal, and were to the effect that he was to follow the Prussians, who—so Napoleon as yet supposed—were doubtless on the way to Namur, to attack them, to keep them in sight, and to communicate with the Imperial headquarters by the paved Namur road. Grouchy demurred to this plan, representing that the Prussians had already a start of some fifteen hours, that the troops he was to lead were now so scattered that it would take time to get them in motion, and that the presumed line of retreat would carry him constantly farther from the main body of the French, with little prospect of frustrating any designs of the Prussians in the direction of the Meuse, and he urged that he might unite in the Emperor's advance against the English,—all which was answered by the Emperor's insisting upon the execution of the order already given. Leaving Grouchy to the discharge of his unwelcome task, Napoleon rode westward to join Ney. On reaching Marbais,—whence his troops were

already advancing upon Quatre Bras, as were Ney's also from Frasnes,—Napoleon received reports from the reconnoitring cavalry which caused him to doubt the accuracy of his assumption that the Prussians were moving away from the English, and he dictated to Marshal Bertrand, in the absence of Soult, a written order to Grouchy directing his advance toward Gembloux. Riding on again until he met Ney, "Napoleon waited with impatience until the troops had defiled at Quatre Bras, a movement which was not completed until three o'clock."⁷⁴

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2 P.M.

3 P.M.

⁷⁴ The quotation is from Thiers, and indicates the hour of the Emperor's arrival at Quatre Bras—3 P.M.: a previous date, 12 M., has been fixed by that of Napoleon's second order to Ney: the order of events between these two hours, as given in the text, is precisely that given by Thiers, and accords very well with the statement that Grouchy's verbal orders were given at 1 P.M., which is the statement of Grouchy himself. But Thiers, having entirely suppressed the date of the "noon" dispatch, and thus disencumbered himself of that time-mark, affirms that Grouchy's orders were given before 11 o'clock (see note 71, page 124), and makes this the foundation of his charge that Grouchy's delays lost Waterloo. The French historian has a similar charge to establish against Ney, and he insinuates it by saying of the Marshal's meeting with the Emperor at Quatre Bras, "He sought to excuse his tardiness, and Napoleon, not wishing to increase his agitation, contented himself with some not very severe remarks. But the soldiers, who saw that the *Brave des braves* had committed some fault, whispered among themselves that

Rougeot, as they called the illustrious Marshal, had got a good scolding." Chesney, denying that Ney occasioned any delay by not moving earlier, says, "Heymès, who was with Ney all this day, has contradicted in the flattest manner the notion that the Emperor found any fault with the Marshal for the quietude which was the direct consequence of his orders. But such evidence as this can hardly add force to that which those orders themselves afford." = Thiers' idea that the defiling of the French troops through Quatre Bras was completed at 3 o'clock, is correct only as to the vanguard, for it was many hours before the mass of the army had passed. Erckmann-Chatrian's conscript, who is apt to be more explicit than the more pretentious historians, and fully as correct, says of this movement, "At 8 o'clock we reached Quatre Bras. These are two houses opposite each other. . . . They were both full of wounded men. It was here that Marshal Ney had given battle to the English, to prevent them from going to the support of the Prussians along the road by which we had just come. He had but 20,000 men

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The French troops which led the advance against the English were Subervie's light-cavalry division, supported by Milhaud's cuirassiers, with horse-artillery, —after which were to follow in order D'Erlon's and then Lobau's infantry corps, Kellermann's cuirassiers, the Guard, and lastly Reille's corps, who were afforded as long a rest as possible after their hard fighting of the day before. As the French horse moved from Marbais up the Namur road, their approach was observed by Wellington, who was with his staff, in advance of Vivian's cavalry, which held the extreme left of the Allied line, fronting the road and eastward of Quatre Bras. By this time the English infantry had wholly passed Genappe, and it only remained for the cavalry

against 40,000, and yet Nicholas Cloutier, the tanner, maintains, to-day even, that he ought to have sent half his troops to attack the Prussian rear, as if it were not enough to stop the English. To such people everything is easy, but if they were in command it would be easy to rout them with four men and a corporal." This frightful example of Nicholas Cloutier might have been studied profitably by M. Thiers before he exposed the defective tactics by which Ney lost Quatre Bras, and pointed out how that novice in war might, by other dispositions, have won the day,—

also by the Rev. Mr. Abbott, who has argued that all subsequent mis-
haps occurred because Ney did not
"leave a suitable force behind the
intrenchments to prevent Wellington
from coming to the aid of the Prus-
sians," and "hasten to cut off the
retreat of Blücher." Unfortunately
for Ney, the "intrenchments"—
whose utility in an offensive battle,
conducted chiefly by cavalry, is not
obvious,—as well as the "suitable
force," were not in his possession. =
The force with which Napoleon fol-
lowed the English, after joining
Ney's troops with his own, was as
follows:—

D'Erlon's (1st) corps	20,000 men.
Reille's (2d) corps	16,000 "
Lobau's (6th) corps (less Teste's division). . .	7,000 "
Imperial Guard	19,000 "
Domont's cavalry of Vandamme's (3d) corps .	1,000 "
Subervie's division of Pajol's (1st) cavalry corps	1,500 "
Kellermann's (3d) cavalry corps	3,500 "
Milhaud's (4th) cavalry corps	3,500 "

Total 71,500 men and 240 guns.

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to conduct their own retreat. Skirmishing had already begun between Vivian's pickets and Subervie's advancing lancers, when Wellington, after consultation with the Earl of Uxbridge, the general commanding the Anglo-Allied cavalry, concluded that it was undesirable to make a stand against so great a force of all arms as that which threatened them, while their own infantry support had passed beyond reach; and the retreat was ordered. It was made in three columns—the central column, composed of heavy cavalry and two regiments of light-horse, took the paved road to Brussels and the bridge at Genappe; the left-hand column, Vandeleur's and Vivian's brigades, already in contact with the enemy, were to fall back, protecting that flank, and pass the stream by a bridge below Genappe; while the right column was to follow roads leading to a bridge higher up the stream than Genappe, a route which sheltered them from any molestation by the pursuers. =On the left Vivian's outlying pickets were soon driven in by a sharp attack from several French squadrons, which were checked as they drew near by the English horse-batteries, when the French in turn brought artillery to their front and opened upon Vivian's brigade. Vandeleur's brigade was already in retreat, and Vivian now followed, the French crowding in great numbers upon both his flank and rear and annoying him with shells from their batteries. He therefore took advantage of a favourable rise in the ground, and had drawn up his rearmost regiment to charge as soon as the enemy should come within reach, when the operation was most unexpectedly interrupted. "The weather during the morning had been oppressively hot; it was now a dead calm; not a leaf was stirring; and the atmosphere was close to an intolerable degree; while a dark, heavy, dense cloud impended over the combatants.

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The 18th hussars were fully prepared, and awaited but the command to charge, when the brigade guns on the right commenced firing. . . . The concussion seemed instantly to rebound through the still atmosphere, and communicate, as an electric spark, with the heavily charged mass above. A most awfully loud thunder-clap burst forth, immediately succeeded by a rain which has never, probably, been exceeded in violence even within the tropics. In a very few minutes the ground became perfectly saturated, so much so that it was quite impracticable for any rapid movement of the cavalry.”⁷⁵

⁷⁵ The quotation is from Siborne. Thiers says of this sudden burst of rain, “In a few moments the whole country was changed into one vast marsh, through which neither man nor horse could pass. The troops of the different French corps d’armée were obliged to assemble on the two paved roads. . . . These were soon overcrowded, and soldiers of all arms were mingled in fearful confusion.” The Erckmann-Chatrian conscript says, “I never saw worse weather, not even at the retreat from Leipzig when we were in Germany. The rain came down as if from a watering-pot, and we tramped on with our guns under our arms, with the capes of our cloaks over the locks, so wet that if we had been through a river it could not have been worse; and such mud!” The weather had been recognised as a most important factor in this campaign. From the time when Napoleon examined the sky on the morning of June 15 (see page 37), it had been fair until now, with the exception of the short and apparently local rain at Ligny the night before—caused no doubt by the tremendous cannonade that had gone on through the afternoon, as

this great rain was generated by the enormous consumption of gunpowder at Ligny and Quatre Bras. Henceforth the condition of the roads and ground added double difficulties to the combatants, from Quatre Bras to Wavre. Victor Hugo’s celebrated screed on Waterloo in *Les Misérables* sets no bounds to the effects produced by the weather at this time. “If it had not rained,” he says, “in the night between the 17th and 18th of June, 1815, the fortune of Europe would have been changed; a few drops of rain, more or less, made Napoleon oscillate. In order to make Waterloo the end of Austerlitz, Providence only required a little rain; and a cloud crossing the sky at a season when rain was not expected was sufficient to overthrow an Empire. Why? Because the ground was moist, and it was necessary for it to become firmer, that the artillery might manœuvre. Napoleon was an artillery officer, and always showed himself one: all his battle plans were made for projectiles. Making artillery converge on a given point was his key to victory. . . . Driving in squares, pulverising regiments, breaking lines, destroying and

Pursuers and pursued were overcome by the fury of the tempest, and attempted nothing beyond skirmishing, until the English had fallen back as far as the bridge of Thuy. Here there was a stoppage, caused by the delay of the leading brigade, Vandeleur's, in crossing the little bridge; and Vivian, having sent his battery across and ordered some of his men to dismount and hold the further end of the bridge with their carbines, protected with the 1st hussars the passage of his other two regiments. This effected, he detached one of his squadrons toward the bridge; but it was cut off by a bold rush of the French lancers, and compelled to cross the stream lower down; while Vivian, as soon as all was seen to be clear, led the remainder of the regiment at a gallop to the bridge and across it, closely followed by the French, cheering as they pursued. But no sooner had the hussars passed than the French came under the fire of the dismounted men, who lined a hedge overlooking the bridge and the hollow road that ran up from it; while, on the rising ground beyond, the brigade was drawn up in readiness to meet them. Here, accordingly, the French stayed their pursuit and turned aside to join their main body on the Brussels road; and Vivian, followed only by a patrol watching his movements, retired undisturbed to the position before Waterloo. = The central cavalry column, meanwhile, had been so far protected by Vivian's movement upon its left, which occupied the foremost of the French, that it was not pressed by the enemy until it reached Genappe, through which all passed

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dispersing masses—all this must be done by striking, striking, striking incessantly, and he confided the task to artillery. It was a formidable method, and, allied to genius, rendered this gloomy pugilist of war

invincible for fifteen years. . . Had the earth been dry, and the artillery able to move, the action would have begun at 6 A.M. It would have been won and over by 2 P.M., three hours before the Prussian interlude."

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except Major Hodge's squadron of the 7th hussars, which served as rearguard, and was now skirmishing warmly with the leaders of the pursuit, encountering them both on the road and beside it, in fields so softened by the rain that the horses sank to their knees and sometimes to the girths. Having gallantly protracted their defence long enough to ensure the safe retirement of their comrades, the 7th hussars at last effected their own, troop by troop, and joined the remainder of the column drawn up behind the town.⁷⁶ The French force which had thus overtaken the centre cavalry column consisted of a mass of lancers and cuirassiers, some sixteen or eighteen squadrons strong, followed by the main body of the army under the Emperor himself. In order to check their advance while entangled in the difficult defile of Genappe, Lord Uxbridge had drawn up his two heavy brigades upon an elevation facing the northern entrance of the town, and some six or seven hundred yards distant from it, so as to cover the retirement of the light cavalry. Of these, the 7th hussars,

⁷⁶ The withdrawal of the last troops left on the rear of the town was conducted with marked gallantry by Lieut. Standish O'Grady, to whom Gen. Sir William Dörnberg, the commander of the skirmishers, entrusted this duty, with the injunction to delay the enemy long enough for the skirmishers to draw off, as the bridge within the town was so narrow that they must pass it in file. Left thus alone, O'Grady led his troops at a trot up the road and engaged the enemy until all English horsemen except his own had disappeared within the street; then, retiring at a walk and occasionally halting and fronting, he came to the corner of the street, into which he

filed his men from the left, and they passed through town and bridge at a run. "Dörnberg," says Siborne, "had been some time riding about with Lieut. O'Grady, and on taking leave of him, on the French side of Genappe, shook his hand, while his manner and his observations sufficiently indicated that he considered the service to be one of forlorn hope, and that he did not expect ever to see his young friend again. When the latter rejoined him on the other side of the town . . . and reported that he had not lost a man or a horse, Dörnberg exclaimed, 'Then Bonaparte is not with them: if he were, not a man of you could have escaped.'"

on passing through the town, had formed opposite its entrance, while the 23d light dragoons were posted in their support midway between them and the heavy cavalry in the rear. Soon approaching shouts announced that the French had entered the town, and a number of their horsemen dashed in loose order from the mouth of the street, when they were taken to a man and found to be beside themselves with drink. Then appeared the head of the French column, a body of lancers who halted at the outlet on finding themselves confronted by the rearguard, and there remained, the houses confining them on either flank, while the rear of the column continued to press forward through the narrow winding street, until it formed a mass so jammed that movement of any kind was impossible.⁷⁷

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⁷⁷ The town of Genappe is closely built along a single street, the high-road from Charleroi to Brussels, the bridge lying within the town, which is mostly on the Brussels side of the stream. The narrow tortuous defile

had already proved a serious obstruction to both armies, and was destined to be a death-trap to the French on their flight from Waterloo next day. Southey, describing the latter event in his *Poet's Pilgrimage*, says:—

“That fatal town betray’d them to more loss;
Through one long street the only passage lay,
And then the narrow bridge they needs must cross
Where Dyle, a shallow streamlet, cross’d the way:
For life they fled,—no thought had they but fear,
And their own baggage check’d the outlet here.

“Meantime, his guilty followers in disgrace,
Whose pride however now was beaten down,
Some in the houses sought a hiding-place,
While at the entrance of that fatal town
Others, who yet some show of heart display’d,
A short, vain effort of resistance made;—

“Feeble and ill-sustain’d! The foe burst through:
With unabating heat they search’d around;
The wretches from their lurking-holes they drew,—
Such mercy as the French had given they found;
Death had more victims there in that one hour
Than fifty years might else have render’d to his power.”

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This delay lasted for about fifteen minutes, when Lord Uxbridge ordered a charge by the 7th hussars, who dashed upon the enemy, but encountered an impenetrable front of lance points, the bearers of which were so wedged between the houses on either side and the densely packed horsemen in their rear, that they could not give way if they would. For some time the hussars continued hacking at the lancers, the lancers parrying and thrusting with their weapons, until both Major Hodge, who led the foremost English squadron, and the French commanding officer had been killed, and neither party had gained an inch of ground. The French now established a battery of horse-artillery on the opposite side of the stream, under the direction of Napoleon himself, and the fire told so severely upon the hussars that they were compelled to fall back, and the French, issuing in numbers from the street, drove them upon

"Here did we inn upon our pilgrimage," continues Southey in his poetic manner, and in a note he adds, in acknowledged prose, "At the *Roy d'Espagne*, where we lodged, Wellington had his headquarters on the 17th, Bonaparte on the 18th, and Blücher on the 19th. The coachman told us that it was an *assez bonne*

auberge; but when one of them in the morning asked how we had passed the night, he observed that no one ever *slept* at Genappe—it was impossible, because of the continual passing of posts and coal-carts." Of the inn, to lapse once more into Southey's poetry, he tells us:—

" . . . They show'd us here
The room where Brunswick's body had been laid,
Where his brave followers, bending o'er the bier,
In bitterness the vow of vengeance made;
Where Wellington beheld the slaughter'd Chief,
And for a while gave way to manly grief."

As to the nature of Southey's own grief for the Duke of Brunswick, we must turn again to his prose—a letter written from Brussels, Oct. 20, 1815, to his friend John May, before the composition of the poem. "The Duke," he says, "was a true Ger-

man in patriotism, but without conduct, without principle, without gratitude." = The significance of this record of the Brunswickers' vow of vengeance will be found in note 255, page 400.

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their reserve. Here the 7th rallied, attacked again, and drove the lancers back to the town, from which fresh reinforcements for the French poured out, and an obstinate combat took place, but with no decisive result. Lord Uxbridge now resolved to terminate the affair by ordering a charge of his heavy cavalry, and, having placed a British horse-battery in position to answer the French guns beyond the stream, he drew up the 1st regiment of Life Guards behind the 23d light dragoons, and recalled the hussars. As these went about, to retire, the lancers pressed upon them and a *mêlée* ensued, from which the hussars extricated themselves and, retiring through the ranks of the 23d, turned from the roadside into a field and re-formed. The French column in Genappe, elated at the repulse of the English, sent out loud cries of "*En avant !*" and, while their guns directed an effective fire upon the British position on the hill, a heavy body of cuirassiers emerged from the town and rode resolutely up the slope to charge the light dragoons. Then Lord Uxbridge ordered the 23d to fall aside to make way for the passage of the heavy horsemen in their rear. "The Life Guards now made their charge. It was truly splendid : its rapid rush down into the enemy's mass was as terrific in its appearance as it was destructive in its effect ; for, although the French met the attack with firmness, they were utterly unable to hold their ground a single moment, were overthrown with great slaughter, and literally ridden down in such a manner that the ground was instantaneously covered with men and horses, scattered in all directions. The Life Guards, pursuing their victorious course, dashed into Genappe and drove all before them as far as the opposite outlet of the town."⁷⁸ This vigorous check to

⁷⁸ This account of the charge is Siborne's. Thiers' version of the

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the pursuit had not only ensured time for the undisturbed and orderly retreat of the Allied army: it inspired the pursuers with a salutary respect for the English horsemen, which caused them to follow with great circumspection and to volunteer no further serious attack during the remainder of the march. For a time, indeed, they endeavoured to get upon the flank of the retiring column, but they were met here by the dragoon regiments—the Royals, Scots Greys, and Inniskillings, who retired by alternate squadrons, covered by their own skirmishers; but the soft ground, soaked as it was by the continued rain, made such manœuvring difficult, and the troops of both armies soon confined their movements to the paved road, where hostilities were limited to an interchange of artillery fire.⁷⁹ Thus the rearguard moved onward

affair is as follows:—"As we left Genappe, the English hussars charged our cavalry, but were immediately driven back by our lancers. Lord Uxbridge, in his turn, charged our lancers at the head of the mounted Guards, and drove them back. But the English Guards were compelled to yield before our cuirassiers. In a few minutes the ground was strewn with dead and wounded, the greater number belonging to our enemies. Our cannon especially had covered the ground with lacerated human bodies, most fearful to behold. During these attacks, Col. Sourd, a model hero, covered himself with glory. Though his arm was lacerated with sabre-wounds and half severed from his body, he persisted in remaining on his horse. He only dismounted to have the limb amputated, which operation did not diminish either his zeal or courage, for he mounted his horse immediately, and remained at

the head of his regiment until it reached the walls of Paris.—During all these charges Napoleon did not cease for one moment to direct the advance-guard himself." = Exception can positively be taken to one part of Thiers' account, that which says that "the ground was strewn with dead and wounded," most of whom were English. But two English regiments were engaged on this occasion, the 1st Life Guards and the 7th hussars: the English official return of killed, wounded, and missing on June 17th shows that during the entire day the Guards lost but 15 men, the hussars 36—a total of 51, of whom 32 were wounded, and probably did not strew the ground to any great extent. As to the anecdote of Col. Sourd's heroism, Sir Edward Cust does not hesitate to pronounce it "a bounce."

⁷⁹ Here again is conflicting testimony. Siborne describes "the

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to the position which the Anglo-Allied army had already taken up, and, except for a single brigade yet on its march from Ghent, completed its array. The arriving regiments went, as their predecessors had done, each to the place appointed for it to hold in the morrow's action, as laid down in advance by Wellington upon the map of the field in his possession.⁸⁰ The 23d light dragoons alone, still acting as rearguard, halted and drew up in the hollow of La Haye Sainte, before the Allied line, to check the French cavalry should it continue its advance along the Brussels road. But the French stopped short of this point, and—by the order of Napoleon, who wished to ascertain whether the English had really taken position here or intended to continue their retreat through the Forest of Soignies—opened a cannonade upon the centre of the English line where it crossed the Brussels road. Picton, who stood upon the rising ground in rear of La Haye Sainte, watching the enemy's approach along the highroad, called up the batteries nearest by, and directed their fire against the head of an infantry column which showed itself between La Belle Alliance and La Haye Sainte, at a point where the road is cut through a hillock. In this position the guns enfiladed the column, which was shut in by the steep banks on either flank

[English] guns and rockets constantly plying the enemy's advance." Thiers says, "Napoleon—who under torrents of rain gave directions for all these movements himself—had ordered up twenty-four pieces of cannon, which kept up an unceasing fire on the retreating columns. The English, hastening forward, did not allow themselves time to fire in return, but suffered our balls to do fierce execution among their living masses, without making any attempt

to retreat." (*Retreat*, as it reads in the American edition, is doubtless the printer's perversion of *retort*.) Again the official returns enable us to judge of the fierce execution which the twenty-four guns wrought among the living masses. The entire loss of the rearguard led by Lord Uxbridge amounted, for the whole day and including the affair at Genappe, to 60 men and 78 horses, out of a total strength of about 4,500 men.

⁸⁰ See pages 15, 16.

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and pressed forward by troops advancing in its rear ; and for half an hour it continued to melt away under the fire before it could effect its retreat. By this time night was falling, hastened by the rain and a heavy mist ; and both armies, throwing out pickets, took up their quarters for the night, though the excitement of the opponents continued to find vent in a number of little cavalry skirmishes that displayed much individual gallantry, but led to no result.

Night.

The English, by their early arrival, had been enabled to avail themselves of whatever shelter could be provided in the way of trees, brushwood, or hollows in the ground, against the continued discomfort of the storm ; and they were permitted to make watch-fires at will, for which the forest in their rear furnished abundant material, until, as Napoleon phrased it, "the horizon seemed one vast conflagration ;" but they suffered from want of food, while there was no forage for their horses.⁸¹ Thus they passed the night, so close to the still gathering enemy whose attack they were to meet on the morrow that only a distance varying from a thousand to fifteen hundred yards separated the positions of the two armies. During the evening the Duke of Wellington received Blücher's answer

⁸¹ This is the statement of the English writers, who dwell much upon it. Thiers affirms that "their commissariat had provided them with abundant provisions, though obtained at a high price." The Erckmann-Chatrian conscript says, "There was not quarter enough food in the towns through which we passed to supply such numbers. The English had already taken nearly everything. We had a little rice left, but rice without meat is not very strengthening. The English troops received

sheep and beeves from Brussels; they were well fed and glowing with health. We had come too late, the convoys of supplies were belated, and the next day, when the terrible battle of Waterloo was fought, the only ration we received was brandy." Gleig, describing the destitution of the English, says of the French that "the appearance of their bivouacs, as it was seen by our people on the following evening, seemed to imply that provisions were abundant among them."

to his dispatch of the morning, assuring him of the co-operation of the Prussian army next day. He had with him already in the field 68,000 men, exclusive of 18,000 whom he still kept ten miles off at Hal, while at a less distance on his left were 90,000 Prussians, to confront the 72,000 remaining with Napoleon after the detachment of Grouchy's 33,000.

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Though the French advance-guard, following the English rear, had moved into their position before dark, the long columns of the main army were still far behind, some, indeed, having not yet passed Quatre Bras at nightfall. "Our troops," says Thiers, "were in a deplorable condition. The paved road no longer sufficed for their numbers, and the infantry, being obliged to give place to the artillery and the cavalry, were forced off the sides of the road and had to walk knee-deep in the slimy Belgian soil. It soon became impossible to preserve the ranks; each advanced as he could or would, following at a distance the column of artillery and cavalry that occupied the highroad. Toward the close of the day their sufferings increased with the continuous rain and darkness." Even when they reached the end of this dismal march they experienced only a variation of their miseries; for they were forbidden to light fires, lest their position and numbers should be disclosed to the enemy, and they slept, if at all, wet and hungry, upon the mud."⁸²

⁸² This is the Erckmann-Chat-
rian description of the night march:
"The night was dark, and if it had
not been for the ruts, into which we
plunged to our knees at every step,
we should have found it difficult to
keep the road. . . . About eleven
o'clock we reached a large village
called Genappe, which lies on both
sides of the route. The crowd of

waggons, cannon, and baggage was
so great that we were forced to turn
to the right and cross at Thuy by a
bridge, and from this point we con-
tinued to march through the fields
of grain and hemp, like savages who
respect nothing. The night was so
dark that the mounted dragoons,
who were placed at intervals of two
hundred paces like guide-posts, kept

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Napoleon—after assuring himself that the English purposed giving him battle in the position they had taken—spent a great part of the night in reconnoitring it. “Having left his staff in the rear, he advanced on foot along the height occupied by the English. Accompanied by the Grand Marshal Bertrand, and his first page Gudin, he moved about there for a long time, seeking to ascertain the peculiarities of the position. At every step he sank into the mud, from which he extricated himself, sometimes by the help of the Grand Marshal’s arm, sometimes by Gudin’s, and then continued his observations with his pocket-glass.” Remounting his horse, he returned to his headquarters at Caillou Farm,⁸³ and, announcing a decisive battle

shouting, ‘This way, this way!’ . . . On mounting a little elevation we perceived the English pickets through the rain. We were ordered to take a position in the grain fields, with several regiments which we could not see, and not to light our fires. . . . Now just imagine us lying in the grain under a pouring rain like regular gipsies, shivering with cold, . . . and happy in having a turnip or a radish to keep up our strength.” = Scott pictures this night bivouac in the opening stanza of his *Dance of Death*:—

“Night and morning were at meeting
Over Waterloo;
Cocks had sung their earliest
greeting;
Faint and low they crew,
For no paly beam yet shone
On the heights of Mount Saint
John;
Tempest-clouds prolong’d the sway
Of timeless darkness over day;
Whirlwind, thunder-clap, and
shower
Mark’d it a predestin’d hour.

Broad and frequent through the
night

Flash’d the sheets of levin-light;
Muskets, gleaming lightnings back,
Show’d the dreary bivouac

Where the soldiers lay,
Chill and stiff and drench’d with
rain,

Wishing dawn of morn again,
Though death should come
with day.”

The same subject is treated in the opening of the poem on *Waterloo* by George Ewing Scott which won the Chancellor’s Prize Medal at Cambridge in 1820 (see page 444).

⁸³ Caillou will not be found in most of the maps of the battle-field, as it lay too far to the south to be included in them. It was a rather rude Flemish farmhouse, on the eastern side of the Charleroi road, and opposite to the Maison du Roi, which was on the western, and is shown by Chartras’ large map to be about a mile and a quarter from La Belle Alliance, or about half a mile

for the next day, directed the generals to make the necessary preparations. It is at this time that Napoleon is alleged to have sent orders to Grouchy "to keep himself as an impenetrable wall between [the Prussians] and the English"—orders which, if indeed they were ever sent, were never received by Grouchy.⁸⁴ He then took a few hours' sleep, but was abroad again before daylight to assure himself that the English were not retreating under cover of the night; and it was during this second reconnoissance that he is said to have received the dispatch sent him by Grouchy from Gembloux at 10 o'clock in the evening, announcing his intended advance to Wavre at daybreak. To this, as the Emperor affirmed afterwards, he sent an order reiterating the instructions in that of 10 o'clock. Thenceforth till day Napoleon continued his anxious excursions to watch the English and examine the promise of the weather and condition of the ground.

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10 P.M.

June 18,
2 A.M.

3 A.M.

[*Note.*—The chronological sequence of the narrative, which has been preserved as far as possible, must be departed from in describing the operations of Grouchy and the Prussians on June 17th and 18th. This anticipation of the proper order of events seems preferable to interruptions of the story of Waterloo, in order to tell what was passing at the same time on the side of Wavre.]

Grouchy had been left before Ligny to follow Blücher with a force of 33,000 men, the utmost that could be detached from the main army. Napoleon, as he was about riding off to join Ney in the pursuit of

south of Rossomme. Caillon was burned by the Prussians when they learned that Napoleon had slept there.

⁸⁴ The question of these dispatches, said to have been sent during

this night, is considered in the account of Grouchy's movements on the 17th and 18th, note 88, page 151. Their alleged import is stated above in the words of Thiers.

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1 P.M.

Wellington, gave him the following verbal instructions: "Pursue the Prussians; complete their defeat by attacking them as soon as you come up with them, and never let them out of your sight. I am going to unite the remainder of this portion of the army with Marshal Ney's corps, to march against the English and to fight them if they should hold their ground between this and the Forest of Soignies. You will communicate with me by the paved road which leads to Quatre Bras."⁸⁵ Grouchy—who was less confident than Napoleon that the Prussians had been "put to rout" and were "flying on the road to Namur and Liége"—had misgivings about this order and the vague but responsible duty it imposed upon him. He represented to Napoleon that the Prussians had had since 10 o'clock the night before in which to make their retreat; that even its direction was

⁸⁵ See text, page 128: for the date, 1 P.M., see note 74, page 129. The words of this much-disputed "verbal order" are from Marshal Grouchy's *Observations sur la "Relation de la Campagne de 1815," publiée par le Général Gourgaud*. The words

next afterwards attributed to Napoleon are as given in the *Mémoires du Maréchal de Grouchy*, by his grandson, the Marquis de Grouchy. = The force put under the Marshal's command was as follows:—

Vandamme's (3d) corps (less its cavalry)	. . . 13,400 men
Gérard's (4th) corps	. . . 12,200 "
Teste's (21st) division of Lobau's (6th) corps	. . . 3,000 "
Pajol's cavalry division (half of 1st cavalry corps)	. . . 1,300 "
Excelmans' (2d) cavalry corps	. . . 3,100 "

Total . . . 33,000 men with 96 guns.

This, with the troops under Ney and Napoleon (note 74, page 130), made up the entire Grand Army, with the exception of Girard's (7th) division, which had been reduced in the struggle at St. Amand to about 2,500 men, and had lost all its generals, including Girard himself. It was afterwards said to have been left in the rear to care for the

wounded and protect Charleroi; but it seems probable that it was overlooked in the orders to move, since it belonged properly to Reille's (2d) corps, which was with Ney, and, having slipped away from that Marshal on the 16th, remained to fight at Ligny on the 17th, acting with Vandamme's corps, but not included in it or covered by its orders.

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unknown ; that, if it was toward Namur, it would lead him farther and farther asunder from the main army, and against a greatly outnumbering force ; that it would be some time before the soldiers given him could be made ready to march ; and he asked that he might follow the Emperor. But the Emperor refused, repeated his order, and said, " Marshal, proceed toward Namur, for, according to all probabilities, it is on the Meuse that the Prussians are retiring. It is then in this direction that you will find them and that you ought to march." Grouchy, thus peremptorily instructed, prepared to set out as expeditiously as possible ; but the men, especially of Vandamme's corps, were widely scattered over the plain : some had gone out foraging ; others had taken their muskets apart, in order to clean them after their hard day's use ; so that, as Thiers complains, " it was nearly 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon when this infantry, composed of Vandamme's and Gérard's corps, set out." Napoleon, meanwhile, 2 P.M. had learned from a cavalry reconnoitring party that traces of the Prussians had been found on the road through Tilly to Wavre, and he sent back from Marbais a written order to Grouchy, saying, " March to Gembloux. You will explore in the direction of Namur and Maestricht, and you will pursue the enemy." Grouchy was also instructed to ascertain whether the enemy was " separating from the English, or bent on uniting with them to save Brussels, and try the fate of another battle." The Marshal, by the time he received this order, had reconnoitred the Namur road sufficiently to satisfy himself that the mass of the Prussians had not taken that direction, and he now set his infantry in march for 3 P.M. Gembloux, riding on himself to overtake Excelmans' cavalry, which had already passed beyond that point, and which—in accordance with the order to " explore

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10 P.M.

in the direction of . . . Maestricht"—he now pushed forward to Perwez and Sart-les-Walhain. During these movements the storm raged as violently on this side of the field as toward Waterloo; but there was this important difference, that while the march of the main army was along a paved highroad, the road to Gembloux was but a narrow lane, which soon became next to impassable, particularly for the artillery; so that it was late in a dark wet night when the tail of the column reached its bivouac at Gembloux.⁸⁶ Thus, on

⁸⁶ The statement of Gérard—whom Thiers quotes whenever it bears against Grouchy—shows sufficiently that there was no needless delay in the march. He says as to his own corps that "he kept close to Vandamme, for whom he had to wait, and the troops arrived as soon as was humanly possible in the torrents of rain and over frightful roads." Thiers, however, ignores this, and constructs three deliberate falsifications to show that Grouchy was dilatory—(1) He ante-dates the hour at which the order for his march was given from 1 P.M. to 11 A.M., and accounts for his not moving the infantry till 3 or 4 P.M. by saying that it was to give them rest. "It would have been better," he continues, "to have left at noon. . . . They would have had the advantage of arriving at Gembloux before the commencement of the storm . . . and, having rested three or four hours, could have advanced on Wavre." (2) In proof that Grouchy "had no discernment in the direction of general operations, nor any of the sagacity essential to an officer commanding an advance-guard, sent in search of an enemy," Thiers affirms that, "on parting from Na-

oleon at Sombreffe, he thoughtlessly hastened to Namur," and, "whilst galloping along in this direction, without a destination, he learned that" the Prussians were near Gembloux. In order to produce this absurd picture, Thiers has suppressed Napoleon's explicit, though verbal, order to "proceed toward Namur," as well as the written order in which he previously told Ney that the Prussians were "in rout" on "the roads to Namur and Liège." (3) Adopting, with a slight mitigation, the falsehood of the St. Helena *Mémoires*, he says, "It was certainly very annoying that, whilst the Prussians ought to have been hotly pursued, our troops had advanced but two and a half leagues during the day;" and again, "Napoleon thought meanly of the manner of proceeding adopted by the Marshal, who, pursuing the enemy during an entire day, had only advanced two leagues and a half." Napoleon's story made the distance only "two leagues:" Thiers relents to the extent of a half-league more; but the actual distance from St. Amand, where Vandamme's corps lay, to Gembloux, where they bivouacked, was more than eight miles, and the distance to

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Night

the eve of the battle which was to determine the fate of the Empire and of Europe, while the Emperor and the Duke of Wellington were facing one another at Waterloo, Blücher had gathered his entire army at Wavre, and had made all things ready to march next morning to the support of his ally, only eight miles distant.⁸⁷ Grouchy, on the other hand, lay with the mass of his infantry advanced only as far as Gembloux; while those troops which had been reconnoitring the Namur road—Pajol's light-horse and Teste's division of infantry—were as far back as Mazy, in the vicinity of yesterday's battle-field; and his foremost cavalry, in obedience to the order to "explore in the direction of Namur and Maestricht," had diverged far to the east of the line taken by the Prussians—so that no part of his force was within less than fourteen miles of Napoleon and the Grand Army, with swollen rivers and impassable swamps intervening. Grouchy's uncertainty at this time as to the course the Prussians really had taken, his belief that their main strength had gone eastward, and his entire ignorance that the two corps of Zieten and Pirch had retired by way of Tilly and Gentinnes to Wavre, are shown in the dispatch which he addressed early in the night to the Emperor.⁸⁸ Reports came in during

10 P.M.

Perwez, where the cavalry advance rested, was seven miles greater; and the march of the "entire day," as Thiers describes it, commenced at 3 P.M., and was conducted through a narrow flooded lane, during a tempest. Thiers, of course, omits to remark that the loss of the whole night and of the day up to 1 P.M. was due, not to Grouchy, but to Napoleon.

⁸⁷ See text, pages 119, 120.

⁸⁸ It will be most convenient to group here for reference abstracts

of the much-controverted dispatches which passed, or have been said to have passed, between Napoleon and Grouchy. The first of these—dictated by Napoleon to Bertrand as a supplement to the verbal instructions—is said to have been purposely suppressed by Grouchy during the controversy that ensued, and to have been first printed, by accident, in a biography of him by M. E. Pascallet, in 1842; and, after having escaped Siborne, Von Loben Sels, and other writers, it was used by Charras and

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the next four hours, however, which sufficiently convinced him that the enemy had gone toward the north,

afterwards by Chesney. The French are extant are given in full in originals of the three others which Siborne, chapters VIII. and X.

Sent

Dispatch

Received

June 17,

2 (?) P.M.

From Napoleon, at Marbais (through Bertrand), to Grouchy.—"March to Gembloux, with Pajol's cavalry. . . . You will explore in the direction of Namur and Maestricht, and you will pursue the enemy; explore his march and instruct me as to his movements, so that I can find out what he is intending to do. I am carrying my headquarters to Quatre Bras, where the English still were this morning. Our communication will then be direct, by the paved road of Namur. If the enemy has evacuated Namur, write to the general commanding the second military division at Charlemont to cause Namur to be occupied by some battalions of the National Guard, and some batteries of cannon, which he will organise at Charlemont. He will give the command to some general officer.—It is important to find out what Blücher and Wellington are intending to do, and if they propose to reunite their armies to cover Brussels and Liège in trying the fate of a battle. In all cases, keep constantly your two corps of infantry united in a league of ground, having several avenues of retreat, and post detachments of cavalry intermediate between us, in order to communicate with headquarters.—Dictated by the Emperor in the absence of the Chief of Staff. June 17, [Signed] The Grand Marshal, BERTRAND." 3 P.M. (?)

10 P.M.

From Grouchy, at Gembloux, to Napoleon.—"I occupy Gembloux, and my cavalry is at Sauvenières. The enemy, about 30,000 strong [he means here Thielmann's corps], continues its retreat. . . . It appears from all the reports that arrive at Sauvenières that the Prussians are divided into two columns, one taking the route to Wavre, and passing by Sart-les-Walhain; the other seems directed upon Perwez. It may, perhaps, be inferred that one part is going to join Wellington, and that the centre, which is Blücher's army, is retiring on Liège: another column, with artillery, having retreated by Namur, Gen. Excelmans is ordered to push to-night 6 squadrons on Sart-les-Walhain, and 3 squadrons on Perwez. According as they report, if the mass of the Prussians

and he sent a second despatch to Napoleon, declaring his purpose to march to Sart-les-Walhain, on the way

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Sent	Dispatch	Received
	retire on Wavre, I will follow in that direction, to prevent their reaching Brussels, and separate them from Wellington. If, on the contrary, information shows that the principal Prussian force has marched on Perwez, I will direct the pursuit to that town. . . Blücher . . . has not passed through Gembloux." [This means Blücher himself, not the Prussian army.]	June 18, before 10 A.M.
10 P.M. (P)	<i>Alleged Order from Napoleon, at the Caillou Farm, to Grouchy.</i> —That it ever was written rests solely upon Napoleon's statement at St. Helena. Thiers, adopting this, gives as its import:—"Grouchy was ordered to follow the Prussians in order to complete their defeat, to watch their proceedings, and, whatever they might do, to keep himself as an impenetrable wall between them and the English. . . . 'If the Prussians,' he [Napoleon] said in his orders to Grouchy, 'have turned to the Rhine, you need not trouble yourself about them, but only leave 1,000 horse to follow them and make sure that they do not fall back upon us. If they have taken the road to Brussels by Wavre, it will be sufficient to send 1,000 horse after them, and then, as in the former case, do you return to us, and assist in beating the English. But if the Prussians have stopped in advance of the Forest of Soignies, at Wavre or elsewhere, do you take up your position between them and us, engage them, keep them in check, and send a detachment of 7,000 men to attack the right [<i>sic</i>] wing of the English in the rear.'"	Never.
June 18, 2 A.M.	<i>From Grouchy, at Gembloux, to Napoleon.</i> —The letter is lost, but Napoleon's reply (his 1 P.M. order of this day) shows that it announced Grouchy's intention to move in the morning to Sart-les-Walhain, on the way to Corbaix or Wavre.	Before 1 P.M.
3 A.M. (?)	<i>Alleged Order from Napoleon, at the Caillou Farm, to Grouchy.</i> —This order is apocryphal on the same grounds as that of 10 P.M. Thiers affirms it to have been in answer to Grouchy's 10 P.M. letter, and to have consisted of a repetition of the Emperor's 10 P.M. order.	Never.
10 A.M.	<i>From Napoleon, in advance of the Caillou Farm (through Soult), to Grouchy,</i> —in answer to Grouchy's 10 P.M.	

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to Corbaix or Wavre; and he issued his orders for the advance, directing Vandamme, whose corps lay in front

Sent

Dispatch

Received

report—"The Emperor has received your last report, dated at Gembloux. You tell his Majesty of only two Prussian columns as having passed through Sauvenières and Sart-les-Walhain, although reports speak of a third very strong column as passing by Gery and Gentinnes toward Wavre. . . . His Majesty is on the point of attacking the English army, which has taken position at Waterloo, near the Forest of Soignes: accordingly, his Majesty desires that you direct your movements upon Wavre, so that you may approach us, connect yourself with our operations, and secure our communications, pushing before you the corps of the Prussian army which have taken this direction, and which may have stopped at Wavre, where you should arrive as soon as possible. You will follow the enemy's columns which have gone to your right with light troops. . . . Do not neglect to connect (*lier*) your communications with us."

4 P.M.

1 P.M. *From Napoleon, on the Battle-field of Waterloo (through Soult), to Grouchy.*—"You have written this morning at 2 o'clock to the Emperor that you would march on Sart-les-Walhain; whence (*donc*) your plan was to move on Corbaix or Wavre: this movement is in conformity with the arrangements which have been communicated to you: still the Emperor directs me to say that you should constantly manœuvre in our direction: it is for you to see where we are, in order to guide yourself accordingly, and to connect our communications as well as to be always prepared to fall upon any of the enemy's troops that may seek to annoy our right, and crush them. At this moment the battle is engaged on the line of Waterloo. The centre of the English army is at Mont St. Jean; so manœuvre to join our right.=P.S.—A letter just intercepted shows that Gen. Bülow is about to attack our flank. We think we see this corps on the heights of St. Lambert; so lose not a moment to approach and join us, and crush Bülow, whom you will take *in flagrante delicto*."

7 P.M.

June 19, 1 A.M. *From Napoleon, between Quatre Bras and Charleroi, to Grouchy.*—A message, announcing the loss of the battle of Waterloo.

June 19,
11 A.M.

of Gembloux, to move on Sart-les-Walhain at 6 o'clock in the morning, while Gérard, who was in rear of the town, was to follow at 7.

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The Prussians had hitherto maintained unbroken communication with the English, and they were entirely unmolested by the French up to the time which Blücher, by orders sent out during the night, had designated for commencing the cross-march by which he had undertaken to bring his strength to the assistance of Wellington. "The country between Wavre and the field of Waterloo," which the Prussian army was now to cross, is described by Chesney, from personal observation, as "broken into rounded hills, with patches of wood upon their slopes, and traversed by lanes deep and miry in the hollows. The chief cross-road is that which passes over the highest of the hills (on which stands the conspicuous church of St. Lambert), falls steeply down into

An explanation is necessary as to the two orders declared to have been sent, during the night of June 17-18, by Napoleon to Grouchy. These were first heard of in the mendacious writings prepared at St. Helena, in which Napoleon endeavoured to shift from himself to his lieutenants the faults of this campaign—writings which have been credited by many honest-minded students, and have grossly perverted the history of the period. It is noteworthy that Thiers—who contents himself with misleading paraphrases of authentic orders—gives what professes to be the literal text of this unproducible document. The case of these night orders is briefly summed up by Chesney. "If these tales have passed with critics of other nations," he says, "we can hardly blame Thiers for admitting them into his history, in the

teeth of the exposure of their falsity by Charras. As Quinet has written later than either, however, we may quote what he says [in his work on the same subject, published in 1862], to which we believe it would be difficult to add weight by a word of our own. 'The two officers sent by Napoleon were never seen by Grouchy. No one has ever been able to give their names. The orders they are asserted to have carried are not to be found registered in the staff records. What is still more to the purpose, in the dispatches which followed Napoleon made no mention whatever of these orders of the night. He does not insist upon their execution. He does not even refer to them, contrary to invariable custom.' In brief," concludes Chesney, "they are manifest inventions."

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the valley of the Lasne, at a village of the same name, and, ascending again to Planchenoit, leads on to the Brussels and Charleroi road near to the farm of Caillou, where Napoleon's headquarters were established on the night of the 17th. A similar road, farther to the north, conducts more directly by Froidmont and Ohain on to the crest which formed the front of the English position." Blücher purposed using both of these roads—the leading corps, Bülow's (the 4th), taking the southern road by St. Lambert and Lasne, upon which Pirch, with the second corps, was to follow; Zieten's (1st) corps was to move on the road to Ohain; and Thielmann's (3d) corps was to act as rearguard, covering the movement, and, if not embarrassed by the enemy, was to follow Bülow and Pirch toward Planchenoit. The quarter in which the Prussians could best co-operate with their allies must be determined by the direction of the French attack; and, while Wellington made an early morning reconnoissance of the field of Waterloo, Gen. Muffling prepared and sent to Blücher a scheme for his action in the three cases likely to arise, which is thus summarised by Chesney :—

"(1) *Should the enemy attack Wellington's right*, the Prussians were to march upon Ohain, a point beyond his left, and on the shortest road to it from Wavre; thus arriving without interruption, and supporting him with a reserve equal to the whole force attacking, and able to act freely on the open ground before Waterloo, as required.

"(2) *Should he attack Wellington's centre or left*, one Prussian corps was to march by St. Lambert and Lasnes, and take the French on the right flank, whilst another by Ohain supported the English.

"(3) *Should the enemy* (instead of pressing the English) *march on St. Lambert*, the key-point of the country between Wavre and Waterloo, thus threatening to separate the Allies,

then the Prussians would stand there to receive him in front, whilst Wellington, advancing direct from Waterloo, would take him in flank and rear.”

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Napoleon's first movement in the battle seemed to indicate that the second of these cases was occurring, and word to that effect was at once sent to Blücher, whose troops by this time were on their march. The Prussian cavalry outposts had been early astir, and before sunrise were as far west as Maransart, exploring the defiles of the Lasnes, from that point down the lower course of the stream; while scouring parties examined the country in the angle between the Dyle and the Charleroi-Brussels road, almost up to the right rear of the Grand Army; so that they were interposed between Grouchy and Napoleon, and the French messengers could only communicate between the two by going back as far as the Namur highway. A strong Prussian detachment of all arms from Bülow's corps, under the command of Col. von Ledebur, held also the important point of Mont St. Guibert on Grouchy's left flank, covering the route by which he would naturally move to join Napoleon, if such a movement should be contemplated. Thus no junction between the two French armies could be effected without opposition.⁸⁹

11.30 A.M.

3.30 A.M.

⁸⁹ Hooper concisely summarises the position of affairs in this respect as follows:—"The Prussians . . . had sent patrols through the whole country between the Dyle and the Lasne. The Prussian dragoons were in every lane and village; . . . they reconnoitred the course of the Lasne from Couture to Genval, took note of every defile, road, stream, and wood, and thereby acquired the invaluable information that neither Napoleon nor Grouchy had sent a single patrol into the country between the two

allied armies. . . . On the night of the 17th Grouchy stood at Gembloux, nearly as ignorant of the true state of affairs as he was when he quitted Ligny. He had patrolled on his right; he had not patrolled on his left. This was a fatal negligence. Napoleon, it is true, had not directed him, in so many words, to keep a good look-out on his left, and Grouchy did not supply the grave omission. . . . The division of the French army into two parts, the separation of those parts by a wide

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The Prussian corps, however, had been badly disposed overnight, in view of the order of march they were now to follow. Zieten alone was west of the Dyle, while Bülow, whose corps was to head the advance, had acted as rearguard, and consequently was the most remote from the starting-point.⁹⁰ He was, in the first place, somewhat late in setting out to march through Wavre; and, just after his advance-guard had cleared the town, a fire broke out in the street leading to the bridge, and spread with great rapidity. The danger was extreme, because of the number of ammunition waggons in the place, and all passage of troops was stopped for some two hours. From this cause, and the horrible condition of the roads, though Bülow's leading brigade reached St. Lambert before noon, the whole of his column did not come up thus far until the battle of Waterloo was far advanced. Zieten's corps, again, had been posted to the south of the bridge over the Dyle, and, as it was to take the northern road to Ohain, its march crossed that of Bülow's column, which occasioned such delay that it was not fairly under way before noon, and only reached Ohain when the condition of the Allies in that part of the field had become extremely critical. Pirch, starting to pass through Wavre at about the same time Zieten moved from the other side of the river, was obstructed by the crowds and confusion in the streets of the town, until his rearguard became entangled in that action with the French which detained Thielmann's corps for the defence of Wavre, and he was forced to move on with only half of his command. With these he followed

distance, the neglect of both Napoleon and Grouchy to keep up a connection with each other by strong patrols, while their enemies were alert and in close communication—a

fact which neither Napoleon nor Grouchy knew—completed their share in the preparation for the crushing defeat that was to come."

⁹⁰ See text, page 119.

Bülow, joining him in the action in time to decide the taking of Planchenoit, just as the English made the final advance that swept the French routed from the field. Blücher himself had left Wavre after seeing the troops in motion, and proceeded by way of Limale to St. Lambert, being overtaken on his way by intelligence that Grouchy was moving upon Wavre. Hereupon he sent instructions to Thielmann to defend the position in case the enemy was in force—for he knew nothing of his strength,—but, in the event of the French crossing the Dyle at another point, or not being formidable in numbers, Thielmann was then to leave but a few battalions in Wavre, and bring the remainder of his corps to act as a reserve to the main army. Blücher then joined Bülow, the presence of whose advance-guard on the heights of St. Lambert had already been descried by the French, and received Müffling's despatch designating the line of advance he was desired to take—information of which Bülow had been so much in need that he had sent forward a messenger to Wellington's headquarters to make the inquiry, but the messenger had been taken by the French.⁹¹ It was now important to hasten the difficult

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12 M.

⁹¹ Napoleon was about ordering an important attack by Ney, and was taking a preliminary view of the field, when, as Siborne tells it, "he perceived in the direction of St. Lambert an indistinct mass, having the appearance of a body of troops; and, pointing out the object to Soult, who was near him at the time, asked his opinion, whereupon the Marshal observed that he really conceived it to be a column on the march, and that there was great reason to believe it was a detachment from Grouchy. All the staff directed their telescopes upon the point indicated; and, as

the atmosphere was not very clear, different opinions were entertained: some asserting that what had been taken for troops were trees; others, that they were columns in position; whilst several agreed with Soult that they were troops on the march." To end the suspense, the Emperor ordered a strong reconnoitring party to his right, which presently captured and sent in the messenger, a Prussian non-commissioned officer of hussars, whom Bülow had sent with a note to Wellington announcing that he was at hand, and asking instructions. Napoleon thus had the alarm-

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passage of the Lasne and gain a foothold on the farther side before the French could oppose the movement, and Blücher became especially impatient to accomplish this when one of the cavalry exploring parties brought in word that the Wood of Paris, lying beyond the stream, was unoccupied by the French, and that their right flank, beyond it, was wholly uncovered. Bülow, accordingly, and his two infantry divisions and the cavalry, which were all that had yet come up, set themselves to cross the valley—a task which to any other general than Blücher would have been an impossibility. “The rain . . . had transformed the valley of the Lasne into a perfect swamp. The miry and watery state of the roads between Wavre and St. Lambert had caused so many stoppages and breaks in the columns that they were frequently lengthened out for miles. Blücher showed himself on every point of the line of march, encouraging his exhausted soldiers. . . . As

ing certainty that 30,000 Prussians were upon his flank, and he sent off 10,000 troops to the menaced point, and added to his 1 o'clock order to Grouchy (see note 88, page 150), the postscript calling upon the Marshal to “crush Bülow, whom you will take in the act.” The order only reached Grouchy at 7 P.M., when he was fully engaged with Thielmann, and when the battle of Waterloo was past redemption. Thiers' notion of the possibilities of this order is characteristic:—“An officer at a gallop could reach Grouchy in less than two hours, and bring him within reach of the two armies in less than three. Grouchy could thus arrive before 6, far too early an hour to have the battle decided.”=It is no doubt this apparition of Bülow that Scott describes in his *Field of Wa-*

terloo, although he associates it with a later period of the battle, as was quite in accordance with the belief then prevalent in England, that the Prussians only came up when the conflict was already decided. Addressing Napoleon, Scott says—

“——Dost thou turn thine eye
When coming squadrons gleam afar,
And fresher thunders wake the war,
And other standards fly?—
Think not that, in yon columns file
Thy conquering troops from distant
Dyle—

Is Blücher yet unknown?
Or dwells not in thy memory still
(Heard frequent in thine hour of ill)
What words of hate and vengeance
thrill

In Prussia's trumpet tone?”

the ground yielded to their pressure, both cavalry and infantry became dispirited; and when the artillery were fairly checked by the guns sinking axle-deep, and the men, already worn down by fatigue, were required to work them out, their murmurs broke forth in exclamations of—‘We *cannot* get on.’ ‘But we *must* get on!’ was old Blücher’s reply; ‘I have given my word to Wellington, and you will surely not make me break it. Only exert yourselves a few hours longer, children, and certain victory is ours.’”⁹² The veteran’s energy proved adequate, and, after long exertions, the advance-guard surmounted the western slope of the valley and occupied the Wood of Paris, on either side of the road from Lasne to Planchenoit. Blücher desired to have troops enough in hand to render his attack effective; but the delays in the rear, the sight of the enemy’s moving troops, the roar of the cannon, the urgent appeals that came from Wellington, exhausted his patience; and he ordered the deployment of the scanty force with him—two infantry divisions and the cavalry of Bülow’s corps.—From their entrance upon the field, the doings of this part of the Prussian army become part of the battle of Waterloo.

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4 P.M.

4-30 P.M.

Grouchy during the night had issued orders for the timely movement of his troops in the morning. Pajol, with Soult’s cavalry and Teste’s infantry divisions, was directed to march at 5 o’clock from Mazy to Grand Lees; Vandamme, who was in advance of Gembloux, was to proceed at 6 to Sart-les-Walhain; Gérard, in the rear of the town, was to follow him at 7. Pajol set off at the appointed time; Excelmans’ corps of heavy cavalry—8 regiments of dragoons—was somewhat late in moving toward Bülow’s rearguard; and Vandamme and Gérard were still more tardy in leaving their quarters, and then

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⁹² Siborne.

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marched slowly along a single bad country road, Gérard's corps being frequently compelled to halt whenever delays occurred to Vandamme's column in front.⁹³

⁹³ In the matter of this tardy start on the morning of June 18 Thiers multiplies falsifications of plain facts with incredible recklessness. His main purpose in the whole of this portion of his *History* is to prove that Grouchy's delays, not Napoleon's, lost Waterloo: in his own words, "It must, we repeat, be admitted that Marshal Grouchy was the real cause of our defeat;" and he goes on to ask, "If the time was insufficient [for Grouchy to come up at Waterloo], whose fault was it but Grouchy's, who had lost five or six hours on the afternoon of the 17th, and four on the morning of the 18th?" Now the dates already cited in the narrative show that it was due to Napoleon, not Grouchy, that the French cavalry was withheld from pursuing the Prussians after their defeat at Ligny on the night of June 16; that it was Napoleon who trifled away the whole morning—that is, all the fair weather—of the 17th; that it was Napoleon who positively assumed that Blücher was flying toward Namur, Liége, and Maestricht; and who insisted upon the orders that carried Grouchy to the eastward of the proper line of pursuit. Coming to the morning of the 18th, Thiers consolidates into a few lines three distinct falsehoods:—"At 2 in the morning he [Grouchy] wrote to announce his definite intention of going to Wavre at daybreak [*que, définitivement, il marcherait sur Wavre dès la pointe du jour*]. . . . But, unfortunately, he did not issue his orders until between 6 and 7 in the morning, and, not having made

previous arrangements for the distribution of provisions, the troops did not move till 8, 9, and 10." Parenthetically it may be observed (1) that the troops of Napoleon's, of Wellington's, and of Blücher's armies were all short of provisions on this day, and that Grouchy's commissariat could not well be better off than theirs; (2) that the statement that the troops were as late as 10 o'clock in the morning rests on this footnote—some scores of pages back of the passage cited, and appended to one of the dozen or more allusions which Thiers, *more suo*, makes to the topic—"Some of the troops did not leave Gembloux until 10. These details," he adds, "are attested by letters in my possession, written by inhabitants of the town." As if "some of the troops" of every long column were not necessarily hours later than those which head the advance; and as if the tail of Gérard's corps—which numbered 12,200 men, and lay in rear of the town—could have "left Gembloux" until hours after the obstructing corps of Vandamme had done so. Thiers' notions of military affairs are notoriously accounted worthless by those competent to pass judgment upon them: that his statements of what purports to be fact are much worse is illustrated by these three explicit falsehoods contained in the brief citation above:—(1 and 2) That Grouchy's 2 A.M. letter announced "his definite intention of going to Wavre at daybreak." That letter (see note 88, page 149) was lost; has never been seen since that day, so that neither Thiers nor any-

Excelmans was the first to come upon the enemy, a part of Bülow's rearguard, which he overtook near Neuf-Sart, on its march toward Wavre to join its corps, already moving on the cross-march to St. Lambert; and he sent word to Grouchy that the Prussians were continuing their retreat through Wavre for the purpose of drawing nearer to Wellington. Grouchy, on reaching

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body else could tell what it contained except from Napoleon's answer (his 1 P.M. letter), which begins, 'You have written . . . that you would march on Sart-les-Walhains,' and goes on to say that Grouchy's "plan to move on Corbaix or Wavre . . . is in conformity with the Emperor's views." There is nothing about (1) moving "at daybreak," and (2) the move was to be to Sart-les-Walhains, leaving the advance to Wavre for after consideration. But though the letter to Napoleon is lost, Grouchy's orders to Vandamme, issued at the same time, are in existence and are quoted by Charras, and instructed Vandamme to move at 6 A.M. to Sart-les-Walhain, making no reference to Wavre, unless it be contained in these words: "I think we shall go farther than this village," meaning Sart-les-Walhains. (3) Grouchy issued his orders in the night, directing the movement at 6 and 7 A.M.—a very different thing from Thiers' assertion that "he did not issue his orders until between 6 and 7." Leaving Thiers' mendacities, it is well to hear the opinion of acknowledged military authorities upon the march declared to be so slow. Chesney writes of this—"He [Grouchy] moved at least as early as the Prussians; and the facts bring plainly into view that element in war so often ignored by the historian, the condition and will

of the soldier. Troops that have had a long day's march in mire and rain, and a rest imperfect for lack of shelter, cannot always be got to take their rough morning's meal and start on a new movement as early as the general desires. Clausewitz, who amid deep theory reverts constantly to the practical conditions and difficulties of the warfare he had witnessed, sheds a plainer light here than any other critic. He points out that from the field of Ligny, by Gembloux, to Wavre, is a march of more than twenty miles, and that the distance was accomplished by Grouchy in just 24 hours, *under very unfavourable conditions of roads and weather*. In their best days he finds Napoleon's troops, under such circumstances, often did not make over ten miles. Such conditions, he adds, reduce marching to a half, or even a third, of what is laid down in the closet as possible. And hence he concludes that Grouchy is not to be reprehended for slowness of movement, albeit he might possibly have accelerated his march slightly had he not kept the bulk of his troops in one column." It would be idle to say anything upon Clausewitz's standing as a strategical authority; but with reference to his knowledge of this particular march it must be remembered that at this time he was acting as Thielmann's chief of staff.

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11 A.M.

11.30 A.M.

Sart-les-Walhains, had procured breakfast for himself and staff at the house of the village notary, and was joined there by Gérard, who had ridden on in advance of his corps. They were still at table when some of the officers who were walking in the garden heard from the westward the distant rolling of a heavy cannonade. Grouchy, Vandamme, Gérard, and others at once gathered in the garden, and all agreed that Napoleon had come upon the English army, and was now in action; and they learned from their host that the firing was evidently near the Soignies forest. apparently toward Mont St. Jean or Planchenoit.⁹⁴ Grouchy, on receiving Excelmans' tidings, had ordered the continuance of the advance to Wavre; and Vandamme's column, following Excelmans' horse, were by this time as far in that direction as Nil St. Vincent. A discussion now arose what course should be pursued—whether to turn the army to its left on reaching Corbaix, and, crossing the Dyle

⁹⁴ Charras relates that "Gérard, on coming up to Notary Holbaert's house at about 11.30 A.M., entered, and was conversing with Grouchy, at breakfast, when Col. Simon Lorrrière, chief of staff of the 4th corps, entered, and announced that he had heard firing. At this news the Marshal and Gérard went out and placed themselves in the middle of the garden, in an arbour built upon a little mound. Gens. Balthus and Valazé, the former commanding the engineers, the latter the artillery of Gérard's corps, were there, listening in silence to the noise which had attracted the attention of Simon Lorrrière. A fine rain was falling; this sound was feeble; to catch it better, several officers had bent their ears to the ground. But after a while, the rain having ceased and the clouds

lifted, it became more distinct; then, suddenly, it assumed such intensity that, so to say, the earth trembled. There could be no doubt that it was the resounding of a violent cannonade. The Notary Holbaert and the guides, on being consulted, indicated Mont St. Jean as the point whence it sounded. It was noon, or a little later." The St. Helena *Mémoires* represent Excelmans as one of the listeners, and as saying, "We must march toward the fire. . . . I am an old soldier of the army of Italy," etc. etc. "But at this moment," says Charras, "Excelmans was not at Sart-les-Walhains; and he did not see Grouchy on the day of June 18. He has himself so stated in a letter addressed (1820) to the son of the Marshal."

by the bridges at Mousty and Ottignies, to take the road to Maransart and Planchenoit; or to adhere to the Emperor's orders to follow the Prussians, whom they now knew to be at Wavre.⁹⁵ Gérard, supported by Vandamme, was ardently in favour of moving at once toward the firing; Gen. Baltus, commander of the artillery, objected on the score of the impossibility of transporting the guns and ammunition through the swamps about the numberless heads of the Dyle, to which Gen. Valazé, Gérard's commanding engineer, replied that he had three companies of sappers who could overcome many of the obstacles; and Gérard undertook to get the guns across, and urged that at least he might be allowed to go with his own corps. But Grouchy per-

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⁹⁵ It should be noted that Napoleon's 10 A.M. order, written as he was preparing for the battle, and now on its way (see note 88, page 149), instructed Grouchy to "direct your movements upon Wavre, so that you may approach us, . . . pushing before you the corps of the Prussian army which have taken this direction, and which may have stopped at Wavre, where you should arrive as soon as possible." There can be no doubt, therefore, of Napoleon's view at that time of Grouchy's proper course, or of the Marshal's good judgment in trying to determine his master's wishes. Thiers none the less censures Grouchy for doing precisely what Napoleon directed, though before Grouchy knew that he had done so, and for adhering to his original judgment after the arrival of the dispatch confirmed it. The dispatch was too well known through long controversy to be suppressed, according to his usual custom; but this is what Thiers does

about it:—"This deplorably ambiguous dispatch" [the ambiguity he attributes with his wonted iteration to Soult], "interpreted in its true sense and according to the position of affairs, could only mean that, instead of following the Liège road, where the Prussians had been sought for a short time, Grouchy should turn towards Brussels, it being known with certainty that the enemy had taken that direction which the despatch mentioned *under the general name of Wavre* . . . The man must certainly be mentally blind who could not understand such orders. It was evident that Wavre was only *a general expression signifying the direction of Brussels in opposition to that of Liège*." Surely such gross casuistry is enough to strip its author of any lingering shred of respect for Thiers the statesman, that might palliate this unscrupulous partisanship of Thiers the historian.

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2 P.M.*

2.30 P.M.

3 P.M.

sisted in adhering to the orders the Emperor had given him, adducing also the reasons that a march of fourteen miles, over unknown but certainly difficult ground, and with his right flank constantly exposed to the enemy, could scarcely bring them to the Emperor in time to be of any service on that day, while the Prussians were as likely to be awaiting him at Wavre or retreating to Louvain as they were to be marching toward Wellington; and—in spite of Gérard's impassioned and at last offensive remonstrances—he directed the continuance of the advance on Wavre already in progress. Accordingly, the march went on, until, at Baracque, near Wavre, Excelmans' horse and Vandamme's infantry came upon Pirch's rearguard, as it was following his advance brigades through Wavre on their march westward. By this time also, farther on the French left, that detachment of Bülow's corps which had been left under Ledebur's command at Mont St. Guibert⁹⁶ was moving northward to follow its corps toward Waterloo, and now found itself almost cut off from the Prussian army by Excelmans' advance. With the assistance of some of Pirch's cavalry and horse-artillery, Ledebur made his way to the body of Pirch's rearguard behind Baracque; and the combined Prussian force, under the command of Gen. von Brause, made a successful stand against Vandamme until all was ready for their continued retreat. Then Brause crossed the Dyle at Bierge, destroying the bridge and burning a mill on the river-bank which covered it, and, leaving a regiment of cavalry and two battalions of infantry to guard this part of the stream, proceeded toward Waterloo. Thielmann was now left alone at Wavre, and with but a part of his corps; for he had judged from the languor of the French advance and their omission to occupy the passes of the river

⁹⁶ See text, page 153.

from Mousty to Limale that it was only a weak detachment that had come upon him ; and, in accordance with Blücher's instructions for such a case,⁹⁷ he had considered a few battalions sufficient to hold Wavre, and had ordered the mass of his corps to follow the general movement to the right, so that two of his brigades were already in full line of march westward. As Vandamme's corps came up, and it became evident how great a force he must encounter, Thielmann sent to call back his retiring troops ; but so many of them had already passed beyond his reach that he was left with but 15,200 men to check the progress of 33,000 whom Grouchy was assembling against him.⁹⁸ The Prussian general's task was to hold six bridges by which the French might cross the Dyle and move to their Emperor's assistance—the two highest at Limale, the next at Bierge, two within the limits of Wavre, and one below the town at the suburb of Bas Wavre. Vandamme opened the action by directing a heavy cannonade upon the Prussian position in that part of the valley about Wavre itself, while his light troops quickly got possession of the suburb of the town on the eastern bank, which the Prussians did not seriously attempt to hold. Grouchy was directing this attack when he received his first communication from the Emperor since the beginning of his march—the orders sent at 10 o'clock in the morning, which had been thus long in transit because

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⁹⁷ See text, page 155.

⁹⁸ As Thielmann in the course of the action became aware how heavily he was overmatched, he sent to Blücher for aid. Each of the contending generals had occasion on this day to make epigrammatic rejoinders to demands for reinforcements, and Blücher's was made now. "It is not

at Wavre," said the old Field Marshal, "but at Waterloo, that the campaign is to be decided." His constancy in thus relinquishing a section of his army to probable destruction, that he might fulfil his obligations in the main action, received emphatic encomiums from his English allies.

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the occupation of the intervening country by the Prussians had forced the bearer to make a long circuit through Quatre Bras and Sombreffe.⁹⁹ The order was distinct in its instructions to "push before you the corps of the Prussian army which have taken this direction, and which may have stopped at Wavre;" so far, too, as Grouchy was yet aware, the entire Prussian army might be in or about Wavre; and he was, moreover, already committed to a combat from which he could

⁹⁹ For the order see note 88, page 149; and for Thiers' interpretation of it, note 95, page 161. Its history is given by Thiers at intervals throughout a great many pages, principally as follows:—"He [Napoleon] sent for Zenowicz, a Polish officer, appointed to bear his message, and leading him to a height from which they could see the country round, he said, turning to the right, 'I expect Grouchy on this side; I await his arrival impatiently; go to him, bring him with you, and do not leave him until his corps d'armée debouches on our line of battle.' Napoleon ordered this officer to march as quickly as possible, first getting from Marshal Soult a written order, which would give more in detail the orders he had just issued verbally. . . . The Polish officer . . . lost an hour waiting for Marshal Soult's written despatch. This ambiguous despatch was not worth the time it cost. . . . At this moment [*i.e.* when Grouchy was beginning the attack on Wavre] arrived the Polish officer Zenowicz, who should have left La Belle Alliance at half-past ten, but had been detained an hour longer through Marshal Soult's fault, and who, to avoid being captured, had retrograded to Quatre Bras, whence he had proceeded to Sombreffe, from Sombreffe

to Gembloux, and from Gembloux to Wavre, where, in consequence of Marshal Soult's dilatoriness, he had not arrived until four o'clock. He brought the despatch of which we have already spoken, and which, unfortunately, was most ambiguous.' Having spent as many words upon it as it was humanly possible, Thiers proceeds to divest the despatch of its ambiguity by his elucidation, already quoted (note 95, page 161), that the word "Wavre" is "only a general expression signifying the direction of Brussels." He then reverts to Napoleon's words to the Pole, and proceeds: "Grouchy could only see in the written and verbal order that he was to advance to Wavre itself. '*I was right,*' he said to his lieutenant, '*in coming to Wavre.*' Gen. Gérard's excitement knew no bounds, and was manifested both in word and gesture. 'I told you,' he said to Grouchy, 'that if we were ruined we should have to thank you for it.' This was followed by most irritating remarks, and Adjutant Zenowicz retired, that by his presence he might not make matters worse. Marshal Grouchy persisted in his opinion, and, as if to carry out his instructions still more rigidly, he ordered a vigorous attack to be made on Wavre."

not disengage himself, since his only way to "approach us," as the Emperor's order phrased it, lay through the enemy in his front. He urged on the action, therefore, with all possible vigour. Its details need not be entered upon here—where it is only important with reference to its influence on the battle of Waterloo—further than to say that Thielmann, compensated for his inferior numbers by holding only enough light troops at each menaced point to resist sudden assault until supports could be brought up from the rear, and made good his hold upon all the bridges throughout the afternoon. Grouchy's determined efforts to pass the river had been uniformly foiled by the skill and valour with which the enemy defended their favourable position, and the fight still continued, when he received Napoleon's order of 7 P.M., with the postscript announcing Bülow's approach and calling upon him to counteract it.¹⁰⁰ He could do no more than renew his attacks, one of which, on the bridge at Limale, proved successful, and the crossing of the river was secured. But Thielmann, on finding his position turned, brought up troops from his reserve which checked the advance of such French as had passed the river until darkness put an end to the contest. Grouchy, ignorant of what had passed at Waterloo, spent much of the night in perfecting his dispositions for renewing the attack next day. Thielmann, on the contrary, had learned that the Allies had gained a complete victory; and, supposing that Grouchy would immediately retreat, began before day an attack upon the French before Limale. Grouchy was, however, by this time greatly superior in strength on the west bank; he defeated Thielmann in three successive attempts to make a stand against him, taking Bierge and Wavre itself; and, after seeing the Prussians move off in retreat,

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7 P.M.

Night.

June 19,
3 A.M.

10 A.M.

¹⁰⁰ See note 88, page 150.

Battle of
Wavre.

June 19.
11 A.M.

he was preparing to march himself upon Brussels, when he learned what had befallen the Grand Army at Waterloo. A messenger, sent by Napoleon after midnight, while flying toward Charleroi, brought news of the disaster, and added that the remains of the army were to gather at the Sambre. Grouchy's advance at once stopped. He at first meditated following the main Prussian army; but, knowing his force to be inadequate to meet the strength that could be directed against him, he promptly began a retreat to Namur, which he reached the next day, and thence passed by Dinant and Givet into France.¹⁰¹

June 20.

June 23.

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Move-
ments.

[*Note on Grouchy's absence from Waterloo.*—The nature of the foregoing narrative restricted it to the account of what Grouchy actually did on the momentous 17th and 18th of June. It is impossible to leave this part of the subject, however, without considering the charge, originated by Napoleon and adhered to by Napoleonists, that Grouchy's failure to do certain other things caused the result of Waterloo, with all its consequences upon the fall of Napoleon, upon France, and upon Europe.

The events, dates, and orders embodied in the narrative clearly establish these conclusions as to what passed before the beginning of the battle of Waterloo—that Napoleon's neglect to give the orders for the pursuit of the Prussians, which Grouchy sought vainly to obtain, retarded the beginning of that pursuit from 10 or 10.30 P.M. of June 16th till 3 P.M. of June 17th; that the fifteen hours' start thus obtained was so employed by Blücher as to put his junction with Wellington on

¹⁰¹ The Prussian loss at Wavre on June 18-19 was 2,476: of the French no returns were given, but they were estimated as not greatly different. Among the French wounded was Gen. Gérard, who, Thiers relates, "feeling a presentiment that at that moment the French army was being

defeated for want of assistance, rushed in despair on the mill of Bierge. . . . The illustrious general, whose advice would have saved France, had it been followed, sought death and nearly found it. A ball passed through his body, he fell, but the bridge was not carried."

the 18th beyond peradventure ; that, when Grouchy was at last sent in pursuit, Napoleon directed him upon a course far to the east of that the Prussians had taken ; so that, while Blücher was approaching Wellington, Grouchy was diverging from Napoleon ; and that on the night of the 17th and morning of the 18th Blücher was at the selected point, beyond the impassable district round the head waters of the Dyle, where but eight miles separated him from Wellington, whereas Grouchy was at the same time fourteen miles from Napoleon, with swamps and swollen streams between them. The narrative, however, has not brought out, except indirectly, one important precaution in which both Napoleon and Grouchy were gravely and equally remiss, throughout the period thus far considered and to the end—neither made any attempt to connect their inner flanks by cavalry patrols, and so they were absolutely ignorant of what the country between them contained—that country being in fact in possession of the more vigilant Prussians. Both Napoleon and Grouchy were abundantly, indeed superbly, equipped with cavalry ; but they used their strength so little that the Prussians' horse scoured the whole region between the two French armies and into their very rear, so much so that communication by messengers could only be had by a detour round three sides of a quadrangle, from the field of Waterloo at one end by way of Quatre Bras and Sombreffe to Wavre at the other ; Grouchy, not exploring on his left flank, was unaware of the passage of the two entire corps of Zieten and Pirch through Genthinnes to Wavre ; Napoleon, not reconnoitring beyond the right of his actual position, left the Wood of Paris on his very flank to be occupied without hindrance by Bülow, whom a few squadrons might have checked in the valley of the Lasne. To this neglect, finally, it was due that Napoleon never suspected Blücher's cross-march until the Prussians showed themselves on the heights of St. Lambert ; and Grouchy, on his side, was unaware of it when he began the battle of Wavre. From this joint neglect and consequent ignorance, it is not too much to say that nothing could have been done after the morning of June 18th, by either Napoleon or Grouchy, which would arrest the junction of Blücher and Wellington or avert the catastrophe. It is true that Napoleon's orders directed Grouchy to

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preserve the communication between the armies (see 2 P.M. order of June 17th, note 88, page 148), and that in this respect he was remiss; but there was equal need of vigilance on the part of Napoleon, who did absolutely nothing toward preserving communication with his lieutenant.

It appears, then, that, down to the time of the opening of the battle of Waterloo, Grouchy must be exonerated from any blame for avoidable delay in his operations; but must be censured, along with Napoleon, for negligent patrolling of the country through which he advanced. Next comes the charge made by Napoleon and his eulogists, that Grouchy was criminally stupid in not turning aside from Wavre as soon as he knew battle was joined, which he learned at Sart-les-Walhains at 11.30 A.M., from the sound of cannon. Thiers, the foremost of the Napoleonist writers, states the case thus:—"It was Marshal Grouchy's duty to prevent this junction [of Blücher and Wellington]. A glance at the chart will show that nothing could be easier than to effect this. . . . Grouchy was as near to Napoleon as Blücher was to Wellington. . . . The cannon, which was soon to make the country around re-echo with its thunders, ought to have been the most unmistakable of all orders . . . to join Napoleon." Now, 1st, Grouchy at this time—owing to the failure to reconnoitre—was no more aware than was Napoleon that Blücher was marching toward Wellington; 2nd, Napoleon, saying that he was himself about to follow and fight the English, had sent Grouchy to follow and fight the Prussians. Was Grouchy therefore, when the cannon told him that Napoleon was fighting the English, as he had expected to do, to desist on that account from fighting the Prussians? Napoleon answered this absurd notion conclusively in his 10 A.M. order, when, concluding his own arrangements for the fight, he said to Grouchy, "Direct your movements upon Wavre." Nothing is left, therefore, of Thiers' position except his assertion that it was "easy" for Grouchy to check the Prussians, and that he was "as near to Napoleon as Blücher was to Wellington." The map shows at a glance that Grouchy's march from Sart-les-Walhains to Planchenoit would be more than twice as long as Blücher's from Wavre to Ohain; but the map cannot show the far greater difficulties of the route. Even

before the great storm of the 17th and the following night, the Prussians had preferred to fall back all the way to Wavre, with the expectation of the additional cross-march, rather than try to pass this almost impassable country (see note 66 *ad finem*, page 118). These obstacles are considered by Thiers only so far as to say that the armies were separated by "the Dyle, an insignificant little river flowing from Genappe to Wavre"—which scarcely suggests what it eventually cost Grouchy to pass the Dyle when Thielmann held the bridges, as he or another would in any case have done, or how long the passage of the Lasne defied Bülow. Thiers arrives at the alleged ease of the proposed march in another way:—"The owner of the château where Grouchy was breakfasting said that the battlefield was at about a distance of between 3 and 4 leagues [which was, of course, sheer guess-work], and that they could reach it in less than 4 hours. A guide who had been long in the French service promised to lead the army to Mont St. Jean in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours or perhaps less. The inhabitants of the locality said it would require $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours or 4 at the utmost to accomplish this march. Let us allow 5, which is a great deal for such enthusiastic troops, and, supposing they set out at noon, they would arrive at 5 in the afternoon. Gérard's corps would arrive an hour later, that is at 6, but the very sight of Vandamme's corps would have produced the desired effect, which Gérard's would only have to complete."¹⁰² The curious diversity of speculations on this point and its practical test are thus stated by Chesney: "As Quinet points out, Napoleon at St. Helena assumed that the Marshal was 2 hours' march from Waterloo, Gen. Valazé (Grouchy's engineer) 3 hours, Gérard $4\frac{1}{2}$, and Jomini 5; whilst Charras makes the distance 8 or 9 hours.

¹⁰² On another page the Philadelphia edition makes Thiers say that Grouchy at Gembloux was "only 6 [leagues] from Napoleon, a distance that could be traversed by a pedestrian in three-quarters of an hour"—a mistranslation, of course, for "three or four hours." On the page preceding, the translator, by a similar felicity, makes Thiers affirm

that Grouchy, who had been at Sombreffe at 1 o'clock, "thoughtlessly hastened to Namur," and was back again by 3 o'clock. As the distance involved is above 30 miles, it seems probable that "to" should read "toward." There are so many such lapses in this edition as to make it a dangerous guide—even if it were otherwise in its French integrity.

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To settle this vexed question, Quinet procured an itinerary of the actual road proposed for Grouchy's troops, and found that *a single passenger on foot*, walking quickly from Sart-les-Walhains to Planchenoit, *takes five hours and a half*. From this he very properly concludes that the estimate of Charras is by no means an excessive one for the movement of a corps d'armée." Bülow began his march from Nil St. Vincent, Chesney continues, "at 7 A.M., lost two hours owing to the fire in Wavre, and collected his whole corps at Planchenoit at 5.30, having actually occupied in the operation $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Grouchy, at Sart-les-Walhains, had just 3 miles further to move as the crow flies, and it was near noon when the march was proposed. Tried by the test of the Prussian marching, the proposed advantage of his flank movement fails as certainly as if examined by the simpler proof of Quinet."¹⁰³ Instead of this march to join the Emperor, Thiers and others have held that Grouchy might have surprised the Prussians on their cross-march and attacked them in flank. Where to Chesney quotes Jomini's reply as follows: "The Prussian Marshal, after having observed Grouchy's force, would have judged the divisions of Pirch and Thielmann sufficient to hold it back whilst with those of Bülow and Zieten he aided Wellington to decide the victory.' To this opinion we [Chesney] need only add the remark that Thielmann alone did actually for six hours afford Grouchy that resistance to offer which Jomini declares would at the most have occupied his corps and that of Pirch. . . . In no case could Grouchy, according to a fair theoretical view, have in any way stopped more than two of the four Prussian corps; and, judging from the actual facts as they occurred, he could hardly have stopped more than one."

If the facts and deductions stated in this note are correct, it follows—(1st) that Napoleon's delays allowed the Prussians fifteen hours for their undisturbed retreat from Ligny—time

¹⁰³ It deserves to be mentioned that the assailants of Grouchy in this affair descended to the expedient of falsifying the map to support their assertions. Charras observes that

Gérard attached to the book in which he attacked his commander "*une carte très-inexacte du théâtre des opérations de Grouchy.*"

enough to ensure their junction with the English; (2d) that Napoleon sent off Grouchy, against his earnest protest, to march in a false direction; (3d) that Napoleon and Grouchy were equally remiss in that failure to reconnoitre which kept both of them in ignorance of the Prussian cross-march until the battle of Waterloo was well advanced; (4th) that Grouchy could not, after he knew of the cross-march, have prevented half, or perhaps three-fourths, of Blücher's army from joining Wellington. Mathematically stated, the censure for this result should therefore be apportioned in the ratio of one part to Grouchy and five parts to Napoleon. This summary of over sixty years' criticism of this much-controverted march may be fitly closed by putting in juxtaposition the conclusions drawn by two of the ablest antagonistic disputants:—

THIERS, *History of the Consulate and the Empire*.

“ Marshal Grouchy's fault can only be lessened by taking into consideration the great services he had formerly performed and his truly loyal and devotedly good intentions. As Napoleon said, Grouchy was as useless to the army on that fatal day as though an earthquake had engulfed him and removed him from all participation in human affairs. His neglecting the duty imposed on him, that of preventing the Prussians from joining the English, was the real cause of our overthrow.”

CHESNEY, *Waterloo Lectures: a Study of the Campaign of 1815*.

“ The notion that Grouchy is responsible for the Waterloo defeat must be dismissed, by those who choose to weigh the evidence, from the domain of authentic history to the limbo of national figments. . . . In plain truth, never has a single reputation been so grossly sacrificed to save national vanity as in this matter of Grouchy and Waterloo. So far from earning for him blame, the Marshal's conduct, weighing all the circumstances of the campaign, should have crowned his old age with honour. That the result has been so different is due simply to

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the popular demand by the French for a scapegoat which should bear the shame cast upon them by their defeat, and to the readiness with which Napoleon supplied it in his lieutenant.”]

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The village of Waterloo—which gave its name to the battle from the accidental circumstance that it was thence the Duke of Wellington dated the despatch announcing his victory, together perhaps with its easier pronunciability by English tongues than the names of the places where the contest in fact was waged¹⁰⁴—is situated ten miles south of Brussels on the great highroad from the capital to Charleroi and northern France, and lies just at the southern limit of the Forest of Soignies, which the road has hitherto traversed.¹⁰⁵ Nearly two

¹⁰⁴ Waterloo is one of those battles—like Blenheim, or the Battle of the Nile, or Bunker Hill—whose adopted designations are misnomers. According to Victor Hugo's digression on the *Battle of Waterloo* in *Les Misérables*, “Were ever the *sic vos non vobis* applicable, it is most certainly to this village of Waterloo, which did nothing and was half a league away from the action. Mont St. Jean was cannonaded, Hougomont burned, Papelotte burned, Planchenoit burned, La Haye Sainte carried by storm, and La Belle Alliance witnessed the embrace of the two victors; but these names are scarce known, and Waterloo, which did nothing during the battle, has all the honour of it.” Southey uplifts a similar testimony: in his notes to *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo*, he observes, “Our guide was very much displeased at the name which the battle had obtained in England. ‘Why call it the Battle of Waterloo?’ he said, — ‘call it Mont St. Jean, call it La Belle Alli-

ance, call it Hougomont, call it La Haye Sainte, call it Papelotte—anything but Waterloo?’” Thiers speaks in similar terms. The explanation is simple—that the Duke of Wellington, after the close of the battle, withdrew to Waterloo, and there prepared and thence dated and sent the despatch announcing the victory.

¹⁰⁵ The poetical allusions which cluster about Waterloo frequently associate themselves rather with its scenes than with the incidents about to be described, and therefore occur unavoidably in anticipation of the narrative. As the text, however, is complete in itself, no apology is deemed necessary for the attempt to group here such expressions as throw light upon either the events or the current sentiment of the time. Two of the enthusiastic British poets of the day made a careful itinerary of the scenes of the campaign shortly after its conclusion, Scott recording his impressions in his *Field of Waterloo*, Southey in *The Poet's Pilgrimage*

miles south of the village of Waterloo is that of Mont St. Jean, where the road forks, the chaussée to Quatre Waterloo.
The Battle-field.

to *Waterloo*, while Byron's hero of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* gives expression to the most fervent and impressive rhapsody that the theme has elicited, but lends to it little of local colouring. On the contrary, Byron even withholds its popular designation from the Forest of Soignies, preferring to "adopt the name connected with nobler associations than those of mere slaughter," which he explains thus:—"The Wood of

Soignies is supposed to be a remnant of the 'Forest of Ardennes,' famous in Boiardo's *Orlando*, and immortal in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. It is also celebrated in Tacitus as being the spot of successful defence by the Germans against the Roman encroachments." Byron's mention of the word is in his description of the march of the British troops from Brussels to Quatre Bras in the night of June 18th:—

"And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, rolling on the foe,
And, burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low."

Southey is more explicitly geographical, in the following manner:—

"Southward from Brussels lies the field of blood,
Some three hours' journey for a well-girt man;
A horseman who in haste pursued his road
Would reach it as the second hour began.
The way is through a forest deep and wide,
Extending many a mile on either side.

"No cheerful woodland this of antic trees,
With thickets varied and with sunny glade;
Look where he will, the weary traveller sees
One gloomy, thick, impenetrable shade
Of tall, straight trunks, which move before his sight,
With interchange of lines of long green light.

"Here, where the woods, receding from the road,
Have left, on either hand an open space
For fields and gardens, and for man's abode,
Stands Waterloo, a little, lowly place,
Obscure till now, when it hath risen to fame,
And given the victory its English name."

Southey then goes on with nine more stanzas about the Waterloo church

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Bras and Charleroi continuing southward, while that diverging westwardly leads to Nivelles. Both of these roads cross the battlefield, but it is the Charleroi road upon which, still south of the village of Mont St. Jean, stands the farm of the same name, which is the spot so designated in descriptions of the battle. This farm of Mont St. Jean is in the immediate rear of the centre of the Anglo-Allied position, and may be called the northern limit of the field.¹⁰⁶ Continuing its straight course

and graveyard, much as might be expected. Scott gets over the same ground more lightly:—

“Fair Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though lingering on the morning
wind,

We yet may hear the hour
Peal’d over orchard and canal,
With voice prolong’d and measur’d
fall,

From proud St. Michael’s
tower;

Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us
now,

Where the tall beeches’ glossy
bough

For many a league around,
With birch and darksome oak
between,

Spreads deep and far a pathless
screen,

Of tangled forest ground.

Stems planted close by stems defy
The adventurous foot—the curious
eye

For access seeks in vain :

And the brown tapestry of leaves,
Strew’d on the blighted ground,
receives

Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.

No opening glade dawns on our
way,

No streamlet, glancing to the ray,

Our woodland path has cross’d;
And the straight causeway which
we tread

Prolongs a line of dull arcade
Unvarying through the unvarying
shade

Until in distance lost.

“A brighter, livelier scene succeeds;
In groups the scattering wood
recedes,

Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny
meads,

And corn-fields glance between.

“And, lo, a hamlet and its lane:—
Let not the gazer with disdain
Their architecture view;

For yonder rude ungraceful shrine,
And disproportioned spire, are
thine,

Immortal Waterloo!”

This unornamental church—whose legendary origin in the time of Charles II of Spain is recited by Southey—has been supplemented by a much more considerable structure, which is filled with monumental inscriptions to those who fell in the battle.

¹⁰⁶ Southey was last heard from in the Waterloo churchyard: he continues, geographically:—

beyond Mont St. Jean, the Charleroi road surmounts a range of low heights, which cross it at right angles and along the brow of which was posted the front line of the English army; it passes then, mostly on an embankment, but in one spot through a cut, over an undulating

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“Soon shall we reach that scene of mighty deeds,
In one unbending line a short league hence;
Aright the forest from the road recedes,
With wide sweep trending south and westward thence;
Aleft along the line it keeps its place,
Some half-hour’s distance at a traveller’s pace.

“Behold the scene where slaughter had full sway!
A mile before us lieth Mount St. John,
The hamlet which the Highlanders that day
Preserved from spoil; yet as much further on
The single farm is placed, now known to fame,
Which from the sacred hedge derives its name.”

The last line is Southey’s poetical method of indicating La Haye Sainte, which is mentioned in greater detail presently. Scott, in the passage which follows, not only reaches La Haye Sainte, but from it surveys the valley below, looking toward the French position on its southern limit:—

“——Scarce a forest straggler now
To shade us spreads a greenwood bough.

Yet one mile on—yon shatter’d
hedge

Crests the smooth hill whose long
smooth ridge

Looks on the fields below,
And sinks so gently on the dale

That not the folds of Beauty’s veil
In easier curves can flow.

Brief space from thence the ground
again,

Ascending slowly from the plain,

Forms an opposing screen,
Which, with its crest of upland
ground,
Shuts the horizon all around.

The soften’d vale between
Slopes smooth and fair for courser’s
tread.

Not the most timid maid need
dread

To give her snow-white palfrey
tread

On that wide stubble-ground;
Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush, are
there,

Her course to intercept or snare,
Nor fosse nor fence are found,

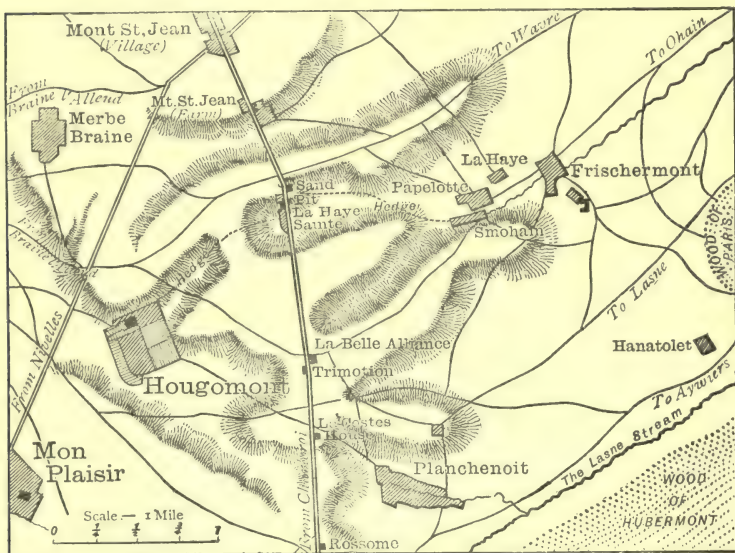
Save where, from out her shat-
ter’d bowers,

Rise Hougomont’s dismantled
towers.”

It may not be amiss to mention that Scott’s poem had been published, and a copy of it sent to the Laureate, at the time when that alleged Poet was engaged upon his own production.

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shallow valley which lies at the foot of the northern heights, and reaches a similar ridge which, crossing the road from east to west like the former, constitutes the southern bound of the valley, and furnished the plateau whereon the French army was drawn up, facing the English and in a general way parallel with it: it is at



the inn and farmhouse of La Belle Alliance—the centre of the French line, and the spot where Napoleon remained during most of the action—that the road reaches the southern heights, whence it continues on its way southward to Genappe and Charleroi.¹⁰⁷ This Charleroi-Brussels road having thus been laid down as a

¹⁰⁷ Southey's geography, in the last quotation, made what, as a patriotic Briton, he calls "Mount St. John," to be a mile in advance of some unspecified point in its rear, and stated—by a considerable exaggeration of the distance, if he spoke

of the farm of Mont St. Jean, but with reasonable accuracy if he meant the village—that the "sacred hedge" was "as much further on," and he next proceeds liberally to almost double the actual distance thence to the French lines:—

sort of base line—bisecting as it were the battlefield, the positions of the two armies, and the valley separating them,—no clearer means of locating the prominent points in the battle can be found than the homely illustration employed by Victor Hugo. “Those who wish to form a distinct idea of the Battle of Waterloo,” he says, “need only imagine a capital A laid on the ground. The left leg of the A is the Nivelles road, the right one the Genappe [*i.e.* Charleroi] road, while the string of the A is the broken way running from Ohain to Braine-la-Leude. The top of the A is Mont St. Jean, where Wellington is; the left lower point is Hougomont, where Reille is, with Jerome Bonaparte; the right lower point is La Belle Alliance, where Napoleon is. A little below the point where the string of the A meets and cuts the right leg is La Haye Sainte; and in the centre of this string is the exact spot where the battle was concluded. It is here that the lion is placed, the involuntary symbol of the heroism of the Old Guard. The

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“Straight onward yet for one like distance more,
And there the house of Belle Alliance stands,
So named, I guess, by some in days of yore
In friendship or in wedlock joining hands :
Little did they who call'd it thus foresee
The place that name should hold in history !”

In lieu of “the Poet’s” sagacious “guess,” Siborne gives in definite prose the story how the inn got its name:—“On the other side of the road, and commencing opposite the end of the garden of La Belle Alliance, stands the farm-house of Trimotion; and about 300 yards further on the road is a house, the same that was occupied in 1815 by Jean Batiste de Coster, who, during the battle, served Napoleon in the capacity of a *guide du pays*. Upon the death of a former landlord of this

public-house, his widow married the farmer of Trimotion; but, losing him shortly afterwards, she consoled herself by taking for a third husband a peasant who lived in the other house alluded to as since occupied by De Coster; but here again death interrupted her happiness, when she once more embraced the married state, and espoused the *aubergiste* of her first house, which from that time obtained among the neighbouring peasantry the title it now bears—*la belle alliance*.”

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triangle comprised at the top of the A, between the two legs and the string, is the plateau of Mont St. Jean: the dispute for this plateau was the whole battle. The wings of the two armies extend to the right and left of the Genappe and Nivelles roads. . . . Behind the point of the A, behind the plateau of St. Jean, is the Forest of Soignies. As for the plan itself, imagine a vast undulating ground: each ascent commands the next ascent, and all the undulations ascend to Mont St. Jean, where they form the forest.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ The only point in Victor Hugo's description which need be dwelt upon at present is the Monument, as it will not be referred to again. This much-derided work of art stands upon the spot where the Prince of Orange was wounded in the battle, and consists of a conical mound nearly 200 feet in height,

surmounted by a bronze figure of the Belgic lion. The top of the mound is the favourite point from which to view the field. It was the absence of any such emblem at the time of his visit to Waterloo that Byron records in the opening stanza of the celebrated passage in *Childe Harold*:—

“Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's dust.
An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so.
As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?”

Victor Hugo enlarges upon the monument and its surroundings—“Everybody is aware that the undulations of the plain in which the encounter between Napoleon and Wellington took place are no longer as they were on June 18th, 1815. On taking from this mournful plain the materials to make a monument, it was deprived of its real relics, and history, disconcerted, no longer recognises itself; in order to glorify, they disfigured. Wellington, on seeing Waterloo ten years after, ex-

claimed, ‘My battlefield has been altered.’ Where the huge pyramid of earth surmounted by a lion now stands, there was a crest which, on the side of the Nivelles road, had a practicable ascent, but which, on the side of the Genappe road was almost an escarpment. The elevation of this escarpment may still be imagined by the height of the two great tombs which skirt the road from Genappe to Brussels: the English tomb is on the left, the German tomb on the right. There is no

The position of the Anglo-Allied front line lay along the crest of the northern heights, for a distance of some two miles from wing to wing. The direction of the heights themselves was from east to west,—receding by a slight curve toward the north at the eastern end of the line, and by an abrupt turn to the north at their western limit, the Nivelles road ;—but the position held by the troops took somewhat the form of a shallow crescent, whose horns protruded from the heights and rested upon advanced posts, at either end of the valley, which they held in force—a cluster of farms and hamlets on the east, and the stronghold of Hougomont on the west. Disregarding for the present these posts in advance of the wings, the front line may be said to follow throughout its whole extent the course of a country road which—entering the field from Wavre and Ohain on the east—runs along the brow of the heights, crosses the Charleroi-Brussels road at right angles before Mont St. Jean and then the Nivelles road (forming in the section between these two the string of Victor Hugo's A), and emerges from the western limit of the field before the village of Merbe Braine, thence running onward to Braine-la-Leude, which, though occupied by troops, lay outside of the scene of conflict. This road, though unpaved, was in good condition, and afforded uninterrupted communication laterally between the different corps of the army, and it was “bounded

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French tomb,—for France the whole plain is a sepulchre. Through the thousands of cart-loads of earth employed in erecting the mound, which is 150 feet high and half a mile in circumference, the plateau of Mont St. Jean is now accessible by a gentle incline; but on the day of the battle, and especially on the side of La Haye Sainte, it was steep and

abrupt. The incline was so sharp that the English gunners could not see beneath them the farm situated in the bottom of the valley, which was the centre of the fight. On June 18, 1815, the rain had rendered the steep road more difficult, and the troops not only had to climb up, but slipped in the mud.”

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field.

by a quickset hedge in some parts, and deeply sunk in others, forming a kind of *fossé*, covering so completely the entire English position that one might be tempted to believe it expressly fashioned for the occasion."¹⁰⁹ The heights themselves sloped not only in front toward the valley where the battle was to take place, but also in rear, into a hollow parallel with it, which intervened between the position-heights and the extended plateau of Mont St. Jean. On this reverse slope the troops that were to bear the shock of the contest upon the crest might find shelter from the French cannonade during the intervals of fighting; and in the hollow the supports and reserves could be moved without discovery by the French, who were thus compelled to deliver their charges against a foe who was to a great extent unseen—as Thiers terms it, “in ambush.” The country in rear of the position proper was perfectly open, and offered no obstructions to the movement of troops of all arms.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ The quoted clauses are from Thiers. Victor Hugo describes this road more carefully:—“All along the centre of the crest of the plateau ran a species of ditch, which it was impossible for a distant observer to guess. We will state what this ditch was. Braine-la-Leude is a Belgian village, and Ohain is another; these villages, both concealed in hollows, are connected by a road about a league and a half in length, which traverses an undulating plain and frequently buries itself between hills, so as to become at certain spots a ravine. In 1815, as to-day, this road crossed the crest of Mont St. Jean; but at the present day it is level with the ground, while at that time it was a hollow-way. The two slopes have been carried away to form the monumental mound. This

road was, and still is, a trench for the greater part of the distance; a hollow trench, in some places twelve feet deep, whose scarped sides were washed down here and there by the winter rains. . . . On the day of the battle, this hollow-way, whose existence nothing revealed, a trench on the top of the escarpment, a rut hidden in the earth, was invisible, that is to say, terrible.” This ominous conclusion is for purposes of its author’s own, which will appear presently (note 188, page 287).

¹¹⁰ The description of the English position as taken from the ground may be supplemented by the account of its appearance from the French side of the field, as seen by the Erckmann-Chatrion conscript. He stands on the eastern side of the Charleroi-Brussels road, near La Belle Alli-

The position of the French army was determined by that of the Anglo-Allies, and was so far similar to it that its front line lay along the brow of a crescent-shaped range of heights, with its wings bowed forward so as to approach Hougomont on its left and the eastern cluster of farms and villages on its right. The first line of the right wing followed the course of a country road leading from the villages of La Haye and Papelotte to La Belle Alliance on the Charleroi road: the front of the left wing was in part along a lane which leaves the Charleroi road some 200 yards in rear of La Belle Alliance and follows the top of the heights as

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ance—almost the position from which Napoleon watched the battle. “On our front,” he says, “there was an immense elevated naked plain on which the English were encamped. Behind their lines at the top of the hill was the village of Mont St. Jean, and a league and a half still further away was a forest which bounded the horizon. . . . When we observed their line a little more closely—it was from 1,500 to 2,000 yards from us—we could see the broad well-paved road which we had followed from Quatre Bras, and which led to Brussels, dividing their position nearly in the centre. It was straight, and we could follow it with the eye to the village of Mont St. Jean and beyond quite to the entrance of the Forest of Soignies. This we saw the English intended to hold to prevent us from going to Brussels. On looking carefully we could see that their line of battle was curved a little toward us at the wings, and that it followed a road which cut the route to Brussels like a cross. On the left [west] it was a deep cut, and on the right of the

[Brussels] road it was bordered with thick hedges of holly and dwarf beech which are common in that country. Behind these were posted masses of redcoats who watched us from their trenches. In the front the slope was like a glacis. This was very dangerous. . . . We saw that the cavalry on the plateau in the vicinity of the main road, after having passed the hill, descended before going to Mont St. Jean, and we understood that there was a hollow between the position of the English and that village; not very deep, as we could see the plumes of the soldiers as they passed through, but still deep enough to shelter heavy reserves from our bullets.” The completeness of the shelter which Wellington’s troops found on the reverse slope is illustrated by a sentence of Hooper’s, when describing one of the attacks by the French:—“The front of the Allies’ position, as seen from La Belle Alliance, presented the strange spectacle of a line of batteries apparently unsupported by infantry or cavalry.”

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they curve forward around the south and south-west of Hougomont until it crosses the Nivelles road in a north-west direction and takes its way toward Braine-la-Leude. The French heights were loftier than those occupied by the Allies, and afforded an admirable position throughout their whole extent for the abundant artillery upon which Napoleon counted so largely; but they were without any such reverse slope as that which gave shelter to the second line of Wellington's army. The only remaining peculiarity connected with the French position which it is necessary to speak of here is a "hollow-way"¹¹¹ by which the winding road that marked the line of the French left wing entered the Charleroi-Brussels road in rear of La Belle Alliance: the high ground at this point of junction required the road to pass through a cut which formed an impassable gulf for cavalry approaching from the front.

The valley between the Allied and French positions varied in width from 900 to 1500 yards, the distance from La Belle Alliance, measured along the Brussels road, to the "Wellington tree" in the Allied position opposite being 1400 yards. The causeway of the Charleroi road formed the watershed east and west—the watercourses winding north-westwardly beyond Hougomont and then northwardly on the west of Merbe Braine into the river Senne, which flows through Brussels; while on the east of the highroad the streams

¹¹¹ The term "hollow-way" is employed by English writers on this battle—by Scott, Siborne, Gleig, Kennedy, and the translator of Thiers, for example—to designate any means of passage, from a foot-path to a boulevard, which is enclosed on the sides to a considerable height, whether by walls, fences,

hedges, houses, or embankments. It does not, at least necessarily, imply anything in the nature of a tunnel or even of a depression below the natural surface, but is applied with a very perplexing latitude to any roadway having lateral barriers. It is here adopted of necessity and under protest.

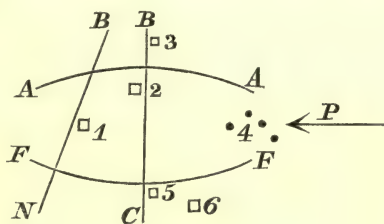
rising within the valley, as well as in the rear of the French heights and of the town of Planchenoit, take their course north-eastwardly into the Dyle and the Lasne, which unite under the former name and pass through Louvain. These streams indicate the direction and vanishing points of the valley—on the west it is lost in a cross-valley which begins in rear of the heights occupied by the French left wing, passes northwardly across the Nivelles road west of Hougomont, ends the Allied heights abruptly midway between Hougomont and Merbe Braine, and passes northwardly beyond Braine-la-Leude: to the eastward the valley winds on in the direction of Wavre, passing from the battlefield behind the villages of Papelotte, La Haye, Smohain, and Frischermont, where it is filled with woods, and then becomes the bed of the streams which obstructed the approach of the Prussians from Wavre.

[The annexed diagram indicates approximately the principal features of the valley and its surroundings.]

The valley descended from the positions of the opposite armies by slopes generally easy; but its

surface was more or less undulating, and, along what may be termed its longitudinal axis, rose into an elevation which crossed the Charleroi road midway between La Haye Sainte and La Belle Alliance. Through this elevation the road passed by a cut—"hollow-way"—with steep embankments on either hand, and the obstruction thus offered to the movement of troops became of importance

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- AA*, Allied position.
- FF*, French position.
- CB*, Charleroi-Brussels road.
- NB*, Nivelles-Brussels road.
- 1, Hougomont.
- 2, La Haye Sainte.
- 3, Mont St. Jean.
- 4, Eastern villages—Papelotte, La Haye, Smohain, and Frischermont.
- 5, La Belle Alliance.
- 6, Planchenoit.
- P*, Prussian approach from Wavre.

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at several stages of the battle. This elevation—besides running longitudinally through the valley from Hougomont to within 700 yards of Papelotte—was cruciform, sending out lateral spurs, of which the southern reached La Belle Alliance, while the northern passed midway between Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, and joined the heights of the Allied position at the spot now occupied by the Belgian lion. Thus the arms of the cross, if the elevation may be so described, afforded a plane surface along which the French army might charge the Allied right-centre without descending into the valley, and the southern arm and also the eastern portion of the upright overlooked La Haye Sainte on its western and southern sides in such a manner that the French could advance their batteries within 250 yards of the farm and 600 yards of the Allied centre—that is, of the “Wellington tree,” which stood at the south-western angle of the Charleroi and Wavre roads.¹¹² Except for this elevation, the valley was a rolling fertile plain in a high state of cultivation, with standing crops of grain, but clear of fences, hedges, ditches, or other obstructions to military movements, with the exception of the buildings and villages, with their enclosures, whose possession was to be struggled for.

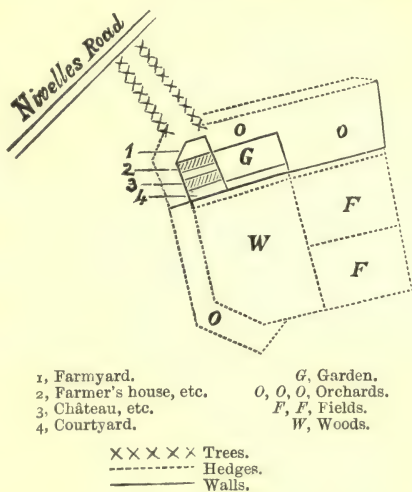
Of three of these posts within the valley—Hougomont, La Haye Sainte, and the eastern cluster of villages—the tenure of the first two was of vital importance, and the third quite essential, to the maintenance of the Allied position. Hougomont—closing in

¹¹² The importance of this central cruciform elevation is dwelt upon by Kennedy, and it is shown in a rude map, taken from Sergeant-Major Cotton's account of the battle, which he embodies in his own *Notes on Waterloo*. Its absence from pre-

vious maps goes far to account for the obscurity of the descriptions of the attacks on La Haye Sainte and the French cavalry charges against the Allied centre and right wing. Brialmont's map indicates it, but less distinctly than Kennedy's.

as it were the western entrance of the valley, and in close proximity to the converging lines of the two armies—was a highly defensible position, and was held in force. Its entire enclosure formed an irregular quadrangle, which may be called 1700 feet square, and was bounded partly by more or less impervious hedges, backed by ditches, and partly by walls of stone and brick, as indicated in the diagram. The buildings were situated in the north-west angle, and were a farmer's house, looking north upon a spacious farm-yard, which was enclosed by barns, stables, and other out-houses, with boundary walls filling the intervals between them; and on the south the château of Hougomont, which faced a courtyard, that was bounded in part by a chapel, the gardener's house, and stables, and otherwise by walls. The court-yard and farm-yard were connected by passages through the buildings and doors in the walls, and also by gateways into the hedged lane on the west which continued the avenue shaded by tall elm trees that led from the Nivelles-Brussels road. Adjoining the buildings on the east was a strongly walled garden, and on the north and east of this were apple-orchards enclosed by hedges, and on the northern (or Allied) side by a double hedge forming a "hollow-way." Another "hollow-way" of a specially dangerous nature was formed between the southern wall of the garden and a

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tall strong hedge 30 yards from it,—for the hedge concealed the wall from the French who charged it, expecting to find no other obstacle, and came face to face with the insurmountable wall, loopholed for musketry. The barriers on the French side of the fields and wood were hedges, with ditches in their rear, impassable by cavalry or artillery or formed infantry. The quadrangle enclosed by the outer hedges was about 1700 feet long on each side: the walled enclosure about the buildings and courts, 280 feet from north to south and 150 feet from east to west: the walled garden 600 feet long east and west, 300 feet north and south; the avenue of trees about 700 feet long from the north-western gateway to the Nivelles road: the distance between the Hougomont enclosures and those of La Haye Sainte was 1000 yards. The site of the buildings was slightly elevated above the surface of the valley, and there was a gently sloping decline toward the Nivelles road and the Allied position; at the eastern end of the orchard the ground was high, almost on a level with the front lines of the armies; but on the French side it fell away rapidly into the valley.¹¹³—The next of the

¹¹³ The hot fight of which it was the scene, and the survival of its ruins as a memorial, have caused Hougomont to become one of the most notable features of the battle-field. The circumstance that the French style it Goumont suggests that the prefixed aspirated syllable may have been a legacy of its English defenders; but Victor Hugo—who is likely to be informed on the

point—explains that “For the antiquarian Hougomont is Hugo-mons; it was built by Hugo, Sire de Sommeril, the same who endowed the sixth chapelry of the Abbey of Villers.” With his allusion to this spot—whose name he twice couples with a rhyme of the school of Stratford-atte-Bowe—Scott closes his *Field of Waterloo*:—

“Farewell, sad Field, whose blighted face
Wears desolation’s withering trace;
Long shall my memory retain
Thy shatter’d huts and trampled grain,
With every mark of martial wrong,
That scath thy towers, fair Hougomont!

Allied strongholds was La Haye Sainte, a farm-house with outbuildings standing in advance of the centre of

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Yet, though thy garden's green arcade
The marksman's fatal post was made,
Though on thy shatter'd beeches fell
The blended rage of shot and shell,
Though from thy blacken'd portals torn,
Their fall thy blighted fruit trees mourn,
Has not such havoc brought a name
Immortal in the rolls of fame?
Yes—Agincourt may be forgot,
And Cressy be an unknown spot,
And Blenheim's name be new:
But still in story and in song,
For many an age, remember'd long,
Shall live the towers of Hougomont
And Field of Waterloo."

Scott, in one of *Paul's Letters*, written at the time of his visit, says: "The grove of trees around Hougomont was shattered by grapeshot and musketry in a most extraordinary manner. I counted the marks upon one which had been struck in twenty different places, and I think there was scarce any one which had

totally escaped. I understand the gentleman to whom this ravaged domain belongs is to receive full compensation from the government of the Netherlands." = Of Southey's inordinately prolix tribute about one-third of the stanzas may be quoted for their realistic and guide-book properties.

- "A goodly mansion this, with gardens fair,
And ancient groves and fruitful orchard wide,
Its dovecot and its decent house of prayer,
Its ample stalls and garners well supplied,
And spacious bartons clean, well-wall'd around,
Where all the wealth of rural life was found.
- "That goodly mansion on the ground was laid,
Save here and there a blacken'd, ruined wall,
The wounded who were borne beneath its shade
Had there been crush'd and buried by the fall;
And there they lie where they received their doom—
Oh, let no hand disturb that honourable tomb!
- "Contiguous to this wreck, the little fane,
For worship hallow'd, still for worship stands,
Save that its Crucifix displays too plain
The marks of outrage from irreverent hands.

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the position. The dwelling, a strongly constructed brick house, stood upon the western side of the Charleroi

Alas! to think such irreligious deed
Of wrong from British soldiers should proceed!

“Toward the grove, the wall with musket-holes
Is pierced: our soldiers here their station held
Against the foe, and many were the souls
There from their fleshly tenements expell’d.
Six hundred Frenchmen have been burnt close by,
And underneath one mound their bones and ashes lie.

“Now, Hougomont, farewell to thy domain!
Might I dispose of thee, no woodman’s hand
Should e’er thy venerable groves profane;
Untouch’d and like a temple should they stand,
And, consecrate by general feeling, wave
Their branches o’er the ground where sleep the brave.

“Thy ruins, as they fell, should aye remain—
What monument so fit for those below?
Thy garden through whole ages should retain
The form and fashion which it weareth now,
That future pilgrims here might all things see
Such as they were at this great victory.”

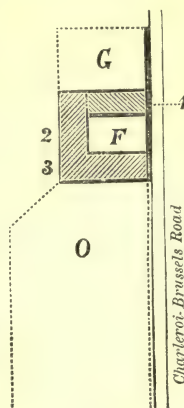
That Southey’s sentiment, that Hougomont should be allowed to remain as the battle left it, has been shared by others appears from an illustration in Appleton’s *Picturesque Europe* (Vol. III., page 333), showing the courtyard, ruins of the château, and the gardener’s house as they stand to-day. = Siborne, writing of them about 1844, said, “The barn in the courtyard has indeed been again roofed, and the gardener’s house is now occupied by the farmer; but the château itself and the buildings surrounding the old farm-yard present to the eye nothing more than crumbling walls, scattered stones, bricks, and rubbish. A portion of the tower, with its winding staircase, still exists. But the attention of the visi-

tor is most naturally and strongly arrested by the chapel, which, although it immediately adjoined the burning château, survives the wreck around it, and inclines him to listen without a sneer to the guide when, pointing to the scorched feet of the wooden figure of the Saviour of mankind in the interior over the entrance, he ascribes the preservation of the sanctuary to the miraculous interposition of Providence. A sanctuary indeed it proved to such of the wounded as took refuge within its walls, who were thus spared from the agonizing death that befell their suffering comrades in the other buildings, which became a prey to the devouring flames, and from which it was impossible, under the circum-

road at the foot of the heights forming the Allied position, and 750 feet in advance of the "Wellington tree." The house itself formed the north side of a square, stables the western side, and a barn the southern, while a brick wall along the roadside completed the solidly bounded enclosure. The interior of the yard

was 120 feet from north to south, 135 feet from east to west. On the north of the house was a garden, enclosed on the side toward the road by a wall in prolongation of the eastern end of the house, and on the northern (or Allied) and western sides by a stout hedge,—the garden being in area about 200 feet square. South of the farm-yard and barn, and running down into the valley for a length of 700 feet, was an orchard about 230 feet in width, which was separated from the Charleroi road and bounded on the south and west by hedges, the long sides of which connected with the farm-yard wall. Though much inferior to Hougomont in size and capability for defence, the buildings and quadrangle of La Haye Sainte constituted a redoubt which its defenders would probably have held securely, but for the heedlessness of the soldiery and official negligence. A door and a large gate opened from the yard upon the highroad; there were doorways from

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- 1, Farm-house.
- 2, Stable.
- 3, Barn.
- G, Garden.
- O, Orchard.
- Hedges.
- Walls.

stances of the moment, to extricate but a small proportion. In the great garden it is not easy to trace its original design. . . . The wood has altogether vanished. . . . This constitutes the only material deviation; the orchards and remaining

enclosures continue unaltered and retain the self-same aspect." = Victor Hugo's visit was in 1861, and his description of it in *Les Misérables* is of the kind which young ladies call "weird"; but it is too long for transcription.

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the barn and stables to the fields on the west; and a door on the northern side of the house led into the garden; but there was no outlet from the garden in the direction of the Allied position. On the night before the battle the men on arriving broke up the great barn-door for fire-wood; and, as the carpenters were ordered off, with their tools, to Hougomont, there was no means of replacing it, while the mule that carried the trenching tools had been allowed to stray away, and not so much as a hatchet was forthcoming. Thus the little garrison found itself insecurely fenced on the side of the enemy, and with no direct means of access from its own army. On the opposite side of the Charleroi road from La Haye Sainte, and about midway between it and the Allied heights, was a sand-pit capable of containing some 150 riflemen, and which was concealed from distant observation by the tall grain around it. From the south-western angle of the farm buildings to the north-eastern angle of the Hougomont enclosure, also from the rear of the sand-pit eastwardly in front of the Allied heights and toward Papelotte, ran hedges that afforded considerable protection to the Allied lines—no doubt the “sacred hedge” that gave the farm its name.¹¹⁴—The places at the eastern extremity of the

¹¹⁴ Southey's celebration of La Haye, which is quite a different Haye Sainte—not, as he calls it, La place—is as follows:—

“When thou hast reach'd La Haye, survey it well;
 Here was the heat and centre of the strife;
 This point must Britain hold whate'er befell,
 And here both armies were profuse of life:
 Once it was lost,—and then a stander-by
 Belike had trembled for the victory.

“La Haye, bear witness! sacred is it hight,
 And sacred is it truly from that day;
 For never braver blood was spent in fight
 Than Britain here hath mingled with the clay.

battlefield did not play any such part in the day's struggle as to require a detailed account of their physical peculiarities. Papelotte and La Haye were farms, having strongly built residences and outbuildings, walled and hedged after the fashion of the country. Smohain was a small village, lying a little to their south-east, about the sources of a stream of the same name which ran into the Lasne. Their importance came only from their situation in advance of the extreme left wing of the Allies, which was without any other support, and was extended eastwardly in anticipation of the arrival of the Prussians in that direction. These advanced posts were occupied only by enough troops of not the best quality to withstand an attack until support could be sent them; and they witnessed little more than some desultory skirmishing until the coming up of the Prussians made the position of value to the French. Frischermont was the name of a village lower down the stream that rises in Smohain, and also of a château standing upon a wooded promontory that occupies the angle between that stream and the Lasne, so that it was in the line of an advance from the direction of Wavre upon Planchenoit. Both the village and the château were so far south as to be in prolongation of the French

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field.

Set where thou wilt thy foot, thou scarce canst tread
Here on a spot unhallow'd by the dead.

“Still eastward from this point thy way pursue.

There grows a single hedge along the lane,—
No other is there far or near in view :

The raging enemy essay'd in vain

To pass that line,—a braver foe withstood,

And the whole ground was moisten'd with their blood.”

Southey says so much here of “Britain's” connection with La Haye Sainte that it becomes worth while to remark that the troops who de-

fended it were Germans, and that their gallantry was frustrated by the supercilious negligence of the British headquarters staff.

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field.

position, and were supposed to be held in observation by the cavalry on their right flank; but this was so negligently done that Prussian patrols were able to penetrate thus far without molestation and survey the dispositions of troops in the valley beyond.¹¹⁵ Innumerable isolated houses and some villages dotted this extremity of the valley, but were of little account in the action. Planchenoit, in the right-rear of the French position and so close to the Charleroi road that its possession by an enemy would cut off their retreat, is a village situated at the head of the ravine through which the Lasne flows. It was both difficult of access, if the ravine was well held, and defensible in itself from the construction of its houses and walled gardens, and especially of its churchyard, which was surrounded by a stone wall surmounting a steep embankment. It lay so low in the valley that, from the Allied position, only the church-spire could be discovered rising above the French heights in its front.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Southey contents himself with one stanza upon this part of the field. He has last been at La Haye Sainte, and "inclines" hither:—

"Hence to the high-wall'd house of Papelot,
The battle's boundary on the left, incline;
Here thou seest Frischermont not far remote,
From whence, like ministers of wrath divine,
The Prussians, issuing on the yielding foe,
Consummated their great and total overthrow."

¹¹⁶ The Erckmann-Chatrion conscript's observations upon the English position may be supplemented by his general survey of the valley:—"On the slope of the ravine on one side, behind the hedges and poplars and other trees, some thatched roofs indicated a hamlet: this was Planchenoit. In the same direction, but much higher, and in the rear of the enemy's left, the plain extended as

far as the eye could reach, and was scattered over with little villages. . . . We could even see the little village of St. Lambert, three leagues distant on our right. . . . We took in all this grand region, covered with a magnificent crop just in flower, at a glance. . . . I could see [La Haye Sainte] plainly from where we stood. It was a great square: the offices, the house, the stables, and

The total strength of the three armies which participated in the Battle of Waterloo, at any time during the day was as follows:—

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barns formed a triangle on the side toward the English, and on our side the other half was formed by a wall and sheds, with a court in the centre. . . . It was built of brick and very solid. Of course the English had filled it with troops, like a sort of demilune, but if we could take it we should be close to their centre and could throw our attacking columns upon them, without remaining long under their fire. . . . A little farther on, in front of their right wing was another little farmstead and grove. . . . It was covered by an orchard surrounded by walls, and farther on was the wood. The fire from the windows swept the garden, and that from the garden covered the wood, and that from the wood the side-hill, and the enemy could beat a retreat from one to the other. . . . And lastly, in front of

their left wing on the road leading to Wavre, about a hundred paces from the hill on our side, were the farms of Papelotte and La Haye, occupied by the Germans, and the little hamlets of Smohain, Cheval-de-Bois, and Jean-Loo. . . . Now you can all see the position of the English on our front, the road to Brussels which traversed it, the cross-road which covered it, the plateau in the rear where the reserves were, and the three farms, Hougomont, Haye Sainte, and Papelotte, in front, well garrisoned. You can all see that it would be very difficult to force." = Nothing connected with the battlefield of Waterloo seems to have impressed beholders more than its limited area. Southey, having noted the little distance from Mont St. Jean to La Belle Alliance, continues—

"Beyond these points the fight extended not—
Small theatre for such a tragedy!

Its breadth scarce more from eastern Papelot

To where the groves of Hougomont on high

Rear in the west their venerable head,

And cover with their shade the countless dead."

Victor Hugo says on the same point: "Altogether, we will assert, there is more of a massacre than of a battle in Waterloo. Waterloo, of all pitched battles, is the one which had the smallest front for such a number of combatants. Napoleon's three-quarters of a league, Wellington's half a league, and 72,000 combatants on either side. From this density came the carnage. The following calculation has been made and pro-

portion established:—Loss of men at Austerlitz, French 14 per cent., Russian 30 per cent., Austrian 44 per cent.; at Wagram, French 13 per cent., Austrian 14 per cent.; at Moskowa, French 37 per cent., Russian 44 per cent.; at Bautzen, French 13 per cent., Russian and Prussian 14 per cent.; at Waterloo, French 56 per cent., Allies 31 per cent.:—total for Waterloo 41 per cent., or out of 144,000 fighting men 60,000 killed."

Waterloo.

The
Armies.

	Anglo-Allied	Prussians	Total Allied	French
Infantry	49,608	41,283	90,891	41,950
Cavalry	12,408	8,858	21,266	15,765
Artillery	5,645	1,803	7,448	7,232
Total men	67,661	51,944	119,605	71,947
Guns	156	104	260	246

During the earlier hours of the battle the Anglo-Allied army was without support from the Prussians, and had to withstand the materially greater force of the French—greater by far in fighting capacity than in disparity of numbers. It was not until the day was well advanced that the Prussians came up in strength, and thus reversed the inequality. By successive arrivals, they brought the following additions to the Allied strength:—

	Infantry	Cavalry	Artillery	Total Men	Guns
Up to 4.30 P.M. part of Bülow's (4th) corps	12,043	2,720	1,143	15,906	64
Up to 6 P.M. remainder of Bülow's (4th) corps	13,338	—	—	13,338	—
Up to 7 P.M. { part of Zieten's (1st) corps	2,582	11,670	274	4,526	16
{ part of Pirch's (2d) corps	13,320	4,468	386	18,174	24
Total to 7 P.M.	41,283	8,858	1,803	51,944	104

On the side of the French, so soon as the approach of the Prussians was discovered (that is, about 1 o'clock) a detachment of cavalry was sent off to the menaced point, and these were presently followed by Lobau's entire infantry corps, and these again by the Young Guard; so that not more than 56,000 of the French army were at any time in action against that com-

manded by Wellington.=The quality of the opposing armies ought to be taken into account, no less than their numerical strength. The excellence of the French Grand Army, composed of veterans of many campaigns, following tried leaders, who in turn knew quite well what their soldiers could do, had been already demonstrated both at Quatre Bras and at Ligny.¹¹⁷

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¹¹⁷ Siborne, when reviewing the results at Quatre Bras, says, "The defeat sustained by the French was certainly not attributable in the slightest degree to any deficiency on their part of either bravery or discipline. Their deportment was that of truly gallant soldiers, and their attacks were all conducted with a chivalric impetuosity and an admirably sustained vigour, which could leave no doubt on the minds of their opponents as to the sincerity of their devotion to the cause of the Emperor." Sir Augustus Frazer, a witness of the action, wrote from Quatre Bras on the morning of June 17th:—"The enemy's lancers and cuirassiers are the finest fellows I ever saw; they made several bold charges, and repeatedly advanced in the very teeth of our infantry. They have severely paid for their spirit; most of them are now lying before me. Had we but had a couple of brigades of British cavalry, we should have gained a decided advantage. We had but one Belgian regiment of hussars and some Brunswick hussars, and both felt their inferiority and made weak efforts against the enemy's cavalry, who, pressing them amongst our very infantry, made a mingled mass of the whole. I have never seen a hotter fire than at some times of yesterday, nor seen more of what is called a *mêlée* of troops. . . .

Our infantry behaved most admirably, setting good examples to our Belgian and German allies." Those who were wounded at Waterloo were thus described by Sir Charles Bell in a letter printed in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*:—"I have just returned from seeing the French wounded received in their hospital [at Brussels], and, could you see them laid out naked, or almost so—100 in a row of low beds on the ground—though wounded, exhausted, beaten, you would still conclude with me that these were men capable of marching unopposed from the West of Europe to the East of Asia. Strong, thickset, hardy veterans, brave spirits and unsubdued, as they cast their wild glance upon you—their black eyes and brown cheeks finely contrasted with the fresh sheets—you would much admire their capacity of adaptation. . . . It is a forced praise; for from all I have seen and all I have heard of their fierceness, cruelty, and bloodthirstiness, I cannot convey to you my detestation of this race of trained banditti."=Thiers summarizes the sentiments of the opposing armies at the opening of the battle as follows:—"The English were calm, confident in their courage, their position, their commander, and in the approaching Prussian reinforcement. The French—we mean the soldiers

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The English portion of the Allied infantry which had fought at Quatre Bras had shown a firmness which was simply indomitable, and the cavalry rearguard during the retreat had manifested a resistless ardour that justified full confidence in their efficiency. But even this brave infantry, which met charges with the steadiness of veterans, consisted mostly of second battalions that had never manœuvred in presence of an enemy; so that Wellington explicitly directed his generals on no account to follow up any success by advancing from their line, but to be content in every case with holding their position. The brilliant dash of the cavalry was in accordance with the besetting fault of rashness for which the British horsemen were noted.¹¹⁸ Moreover, these

and inferior officers—in the most exalted state of enthusiasm, thought neither of the Prussians nor of Grouchy, but only of the English that they saw arrayed before them; and all they asked was to be allowed to attack the enemy, trusting for victory to themselves and the fertile genius of him who commanded them—a genius that had hitherto been equal to any emergency.”

¹¹⁸ In speaking of the headlong charge in which the British heavy brigades destroyed themselves at Waterloo, Gleig observes, “It is an old subject of blame by continental officers that English cavalry, if successful in a charge, never know where to stop. It is even asserted by Marshal Marmont, in his work on *The Art of War*, that so well known was this disposition to himself and others that they have repeatedly, by feigned retreats, drawn British squadrons into positions where a fire of musketry from some copse on the roadside has destroyed them.” Similar testimony is quoted by Captain

F. L. Maitland, in his *Narrative of the Surrender of Buonaparte and of his Residence on board H.M.S. Bel-lerophon*. In the course of a conversation among the officers who accompanied Napoleon to England, “One of them said ‘The [English] cavalry is superb.’ I [Maitland] observed, ‘In England we have a higher opinion of our infantry.’ ‘You are right,’ said he; ‘there is none such in the world; there is no making an impression on them. You may as well attempt to charge through a wall, and their fire is tremendous.’ Another of them observed, ‘A great fault in your cavalry is their not having their horses sufficiently under command. There must be something wrong in the bit, as on one or two occasions in a charge they could not stop their horses. Our troops opened to the right and left, let them pass through, and then closed their ranks again, when they were either killed or taken prisoners.’” Wellington himself said of the cavalry, “I considered our cavalry so inferior to that of the

fine troops, with the equally good German veterans of the Peninsula, constituted little more than a third of Wellington's

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French, from want of order, although I consider one squadron a match for two French squadrons, that I should not have liked to see four British squadrons opposed to four French; and as the numbers increased, and order, of course, became more necessary, I was more unwilling to risk our cavalry without a greater superiority of numbers." = Of the infantry, Baron Muffling, writing chiefly with reference to his observation of the Waterloo army, says, "There is not, perhaps, in all Europe an army superior to the English in the actual field of battle. That is to say, an army in which military instruction is entirely directed to that point as its exclusive object. The English soldier is strongly formed and well fed, and nature has endowed him with much courage and intrepidity. He is accustomed to severe discipline, and is very well armed. The infantry oppose with confidence the attack of cavalry, and show more indifference than any other European army when attacked in the flank or rear. . . . On the other hand, there are no troops in Europe less experienced than the English in the light service and in skirmishes; accordingly they do not practise that service themselves. The English army in Spain formed the standing force round which the Spanish and Portuguese rallied. . . . Such an army as the English is most precious for those they may act with, as the most difficult task of the modern art of war is to form an army for pitched battles." Of their conduct in this battle Wellington wrote afterwards (July 2) to Lord Beresford, "I had

the infantry for some time in squares, and we had the French cavalry walking about us as if they had been our own. I never saw the British infantry behave so well." Similar terms were used by the Duke to Sir John Malcolm at Paris in July 1815, when, according to the *Life and Correspondence* of the latter, Wellington said, "People ask me for an account of the action. I tell them it was hard pounding on both sides, and we pounded the hardest. There was no manœuvring. Buonaparte kept up his attacks, and I was glad to let it be decided by the troops. There are no men in Europe that can fight like my Spanish infantry; none have been so tried. Besides," he added with enthusiasm, "my army and I know one another exactly. We have a mutual confidence, and are never disappointed." = These, it is to be observed, are the words of private communications, not of official dispatches. Referring to Wellington's official expressions, Chesney remarks, "The brave infantry, whose constancy in battle helped to place him high on the roll of world-famous commanders, met with scanty praise from his lips, though their conduct won them tributes of admiration from foe and from ally." Kennedy—who himself devised the arrangement of the squares that repelled the French cavalry—says, "The surpassing and extraordinary tenacity of the British infantry was beyond all calculation, beyond all praise, and was the sheet-anchor by which the Duke was enabled to ride out the storm. Full scope was thus given for the cavalry and artillery to

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ton's army; and the composition of the miscellaneous residue was most unsatisfactory. At Quatre Bras the Dutch-Belgian troops had shown that, either from disaffection or from abject cowardice, they were worse than worthless; and, beyond this most numerous contingent, there were many raw levies of whom little service could be expected. The different nationalities were represented in the Anglo-Allied army as follows:—

	Infantry	Cavalry	Artillery	Total men	Guns
British	15,181	5,843	2,967	23,991	78
King's German Legion	3,301	1,997	526	5,824	18
Hanoverians	10,258	495	465	11,220	12
Brunswickers	4,586	866	510	5,962	16
Nassauers	2,880	—	—	2,880	—
Dutch-Belgians	13,402	3,205	1,177	17,784	32
Total	49,608	12,408	5,645	67,661	156

This entire force—with which Wellington had to make good his stand against Napoleon until Blücher should come to his support—has been estimated as equivalent to about 40,000 British troops.¹¹⁹

display their surpassing gallantry and excellence. . . . The King's German Legion were also troops of very great excellence; but the British and the King's German Legion troops, actually in the action, were alarmingly few in number."

¹¹⁹ Kennedy calls it equivalent to a British army of 41,000, calling the British and King's German Legion 30,000, and the remainder worth 11,000. "It may be said," he explains, "that this is a fanciful estimate; but it is not really so. I deduct, first, the part of the Dutch-Belgians who did not fight at all;

and I could form a fair estimate of the value of the others, as compared with British troops." Napoleon's often-quoted estimate was: "One Englishman could be counted as one Frenchman, and two Hollanders, Prussians, or men of the Confederation, for one Frenchman." Wellington summarized the whole collection as "the worst army ever brought together;" and he distributed them after the manner poetically indicated by Southey, who alludes to the fears entertained about them, by the British officers who had observed them, and continues—

"Not so the leader, on whose equal mind
Such interests hung on that momentous day;
So well had he his motley troops assigned
That, where the vital points of action lay,

The Duke of Wellington's position extended along the Wavre road upon the northern range of heights about one mile to the east and an equal distance to the west of the Charleroi road—a length which he had men enough to occupy strongly.¹²⁰ [The order, strength,

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There had he placed those soldiers whom he knew
No fears could quail, no dangers could subdue.

“Now of the troops with whom he took the field,
Some were of doubtful faith, and others raw;
He stationed these where they might stand or yield;
But where the stress of battle he foresaw,
There were his links (his own strong words I speak)
And rivets, which no human force could break.

“O my brave countrymen, ye answer'd well
To that heroic trust! No less did ye,
Whose worth your grateful country aye shall tell,
True children of our sister Germany,
Who, while she groan'd beneath the oppressor's chain,
Fought for her freedom in the fields of Spain.”

The last reference, it may be explained, is to the King's German Legion, who brought their high discipline from the Peninsular War. = As to the Belgians, they are not justly to be blamed for not fighting in this quarrel, if their refusal was on the ground of resentment at the abominable political traffic of which the Allies had made them the victims. They had abundant cause to detest the alliance and the alien government which it had put over them, and to abhor, above all others of the Allies, England, and Wellington himself as the representative Englishman. Most English writers on Waterloo have assumed their conduct to have been due to cowardice; but Kennedy, who was on the ground, does not share this view. “It would be an error,” he says, “to suppose that it was from any want of courage

that the Dutch-Belgian troops could not be depended upon; proof enough exists that the people of those countries are capable of the most heroic and persevering exertions when engaged in a cause that they care to support; but under the circumstances in which they were placed on this occasion, they were without confidence, were not acting in a cause which they cordially supported, and showed that it was not one in which they wished to oppose themselves seriously to French troops.” Charras enforces the same view much more strongly.

¹²⁰ “The non-military reader,” Kennedy explains, “should be informed, so as to be able to judge of the manner in which Wellington and Napoleon occupied their respective positions at Waterloo, that 3,000 infantry or 1,760 cavalry, drawn up

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and relative position of the different corps in the Allied and French armies are shown in the annexed diagram, as they stood at the commencement of the battle. Taken in connection with the map (p. 176), this will explain the subsequent movements.]¹²¹ The extreme left of the Allied front was held by Vivian's hussar brigade, and was, in military dialect, "in the air"—that is, protruded into the open country, without natural or artificial pro-

graphs upon *The Battlefield* (pages 172 *et seq.*), and in the text above. (2) The Charleroi and Nivelles roads, shown as parallel in the diagram, in fact converged to a point back of Mont St. Jean, so that the lines of troops were contracted within the angle, and followed an arc of a circle at the circumference, as if the diagram were folded like a fan, with those roads as its radial ribs. (3) The respective Allied and French troops actually faced one another severally, as shown in the diagram, except those on the west of the Nivelles road, as is explained in the text and in note 126, p. 204. (4) The letters suffixed to the names of the Allied commands signify:—E, British; B, Brunswick; K, King's German Legion; H, Hanoverian; N, Nassau; DB, Dutch-Belgian. (5) The number prefixed to these initials is that of the brigade in the service designated. (6) The number affixed to the initial letter shows the strength of the particular body of troops. (7) The names of corps commanders are in CAPITALS, of division commanders in SMALL CAPITALS, of (infantry) brigade commanders in ordinary type, of cavalry commanders in *italics*. E.g. "*Vivian*" signifies

¹²¹ Nothing on a smaller scale than the excellent large plans accompanying Siborne's work can actually map the position of the troops, and to accomplish this Siborne has been obliged both to omit the topographical features and to limit the area of the field shown to a very undesirable extent. The diagram will set forth the position of the armies, with the following explanations:—(1) The first line of each army followed the cross-roads described in the para-

graphs upon *The Battlefield* (pages 172 *et seq.*), and in the text above. (2) The Charleroi and Nivelles roads, shown as parallel in the diagram, in fact converged to a point back of Mont St. Jean, so that the lines of troops were contracted within the angle, and followed an arc of a circle at the circumference, as if the diagram were folded like a fan, with those roads as its radial ribs. (3) The respective Allied and French troops actually faced one another severally, as shown in the diagram, except those on the west of the Nivelles road, as is explained in the text and in note 126, p. 204. (4) The letters suffixed to the names of the Allied commands signify:—E, British; B, Brunswick; K, King's German Legion; H, Hanoverian; N, Nassau; DB, Dutch-Belgian. (5) The number prefixed to these initials is that of the brigade in the service designated. (6) The number affixed to the initial letter shows the strength of the particular body of troops. (7) The names of corps commanders are in CAPITALS, of division commanders in SMALL CAPITALS, of (infantry) brigade commanders in ordinary type, of cavalry commanders in *italics*. E.g. "*Vivian*" signifies
6 E—1244
"Vivian's 6th British cavalry brigade, containing 1,244 men."

FRENCH ARMY.

3d line.

2d line.

1st line.

Piré
2d Cav. Div.—1865

JEROME
6th Div.—6000

FOY
9th Div.—6000

BACHE
5th Div.—

KELLERMANN—3d Cav. Corps.

Roussel
12th Cav. Div.—1650

L'Héritier
11th Cav. Div. 1650

LOBAU
6th Corps

Guyot
1st Cav. Div.—Guard
2000

DROU

FRI
8

MORA
8

DUHE
8

Artillery—900

ANGLO-ALLIED ARMY.

1st line.

2d line.

Reserve.

H. Halkett
3 H—2454

Adam
3 E—2621

Du Plat
1 K 1758

CLINTON—2d Div.

Merbe
Braine

Brunswick
Cavalry and Infy.
5452

Byng
2 E—1629

COOKE—1st Div. (Guards)

Hougoumont
E-H-N

Nivelles

Road.

Cumberland
Hussars
H—497

Grant
5 E—1162

Maitland
1 E—1582

C. Halkett
5 E—1782

Kruse
N—3 battalions

Kielmansegge
1 H—3002

ALTEN—3d Div.

Arentsschild
7 K—622

Dörnberg
3 E—1268

La Haye
Sainte

Merlen
1082

Trip 1337
Chigney 1086

Maert—DB Div.

Mont St.
Jean

set 226
Ponsonby 2 E-1181

UXBRIDGE

Ompeda 2 K-1527
Lambert 10 E-2182
Kempt 8 E-1958
Pack 9 E-1713
Best 4 H-2382
Von Vincke 5 H-2366
Vandeleur 4 E-1012
Vivian 6 E-1244
COLE PICTON—5th Div. COLE—6th PICTON
Sand-pit E-150 Bylandt DB-3233

Baring K-400

Charleroi

Road.

PERPONCHER
2d DB Div.
4300

Papelotte

La Haye

Smohain

Frischermont

D'ERLON—1st Corps d'Armée

DONZELOT 3d Div. 5000 ALIX 1st Div.-5000 MARCOGNET 2d Div.-5000 DURUTTE 4th Div.-5000
Jaquinot 1st Cav. Div.-1700

La Belle Alliance

MILHAUD—4th Cavalry Corps

Delort 14th Cav. Div.-1414 Wautier 13th Cav. Div.-1886

JEANIN 20 D-3730 19 D-3730

Demont 3 Cav. D-1400

Subervie 5 Cav. D-1700

OT—Imperial Guard

Lefebvre-Desnouettes
2d Cav. Div.—Guard
2000

NT—Old Guard battals.-4000

ND—Middle Guard battals.-4000

ME—Young Guard battals.-4000

Ros some

Artillery-900

Planchenoit

Reserve

For explanation of Diagram
see note 121, p. 200.

tection to its outer flank, for it is at this point that the Allied heights widened out into the general plateau ; but in its front, and screening it from the enemy, were the advanced posts of Papelotte, La Haye, and Smohain. These were held by Perponcher's Dutch-Belgian division and some Nassau battalions, and, though unprotected by any works or particular natural advantages, could withstand an attack until assistance should arrive.¹²² Next to Vivian, on his right, was Vandeleur's brigade of light dragoons ; and then began the infantry troops which made up the remainder of the Allied front line. The first were Von Vincke's 5th Hanoverian brigade of Picton's (5th) division. Next on its right was Best's 4th Hanoverian brigade of Cole's (6th) division, which was drawn up with its right flank resting upon a knoll that formed the most commanding point of ground on the Allied left wing, overlooking the valley and furnishing a kind of natural field-work in which to mount the artillery of the brigade. Here occurred a deviation from the formation of the rest of the line, for, on the slope in front of the Wavre road and in advance of the brigades on either hand, both of which it partly overlapped, Bylandt's Dutch-Belgian brigade was posted—"most unaccountably, as I conceive," says Kennedy, who holds that its proper place was in the general line and between the too-widely spaced brigades of Pack and Kempt.¹²³ These two

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¹²² "The Prince [Bernhard] of Saxe-Weimar," says Charras, "occupied the Château of Frischermont with one battalion, Smohain, La Haye, and Papelotte with another, and held the rest of his brigade in reserve. He had at command three guns, the remainder of a battery disorganised by our cavalry at Quatre Bras."

¹²³ These Dutch-Belgians were among the troops about which misgivings were entertained, yet they were put forward under the direct line of the French batteries, and at the point where the enemy's first onset might be expected. When they subsequently proceeded to justify the expectations that had been formed of them, it became necessary

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brigades, the remainder of Picton's division, carried on the line as far as the Allied centre at the Charleroi road, upon which, as originally formed, Kempt's brigade rested its right, a little in rear of the sand-pit opposite La Haye Sainte.¹²⁴ This sand-pit was occupied by two companies of the 95th rifles from Kempt's brigade, while a third company held the knoll and hedge adjoining it, and further strengthened their position by constructing an abatis across the Charleroi road. La Haye Sainte, on the western side of the road, was occupied by Col. Baring with 400 men from the 2d light battalion of the King's German Legion. The importance of this post had been underestimated by the Duke of Wellington, and the necessary measures for its protection neglected by the officers of his staff; and, though its inadequate garrison had worked hard since daybreak to put it in condition, it was not in a fit state for defence when attacked by the French.¹²⁵ Baring's battalion was

to supply their defection by bringing up troops from the reserve to fill the position to which Bylandt ought originally to have been assigned.

¹²⁴ In the diagram Lambert's (10th) brigade of Cole's (6th) division is shown as intervening between Kempt and the Charleroi road. Lambert was on his way, by a forced march, from Ghent at the time the position was formed, and only reached the field after the action had commenced; so that, in the first instance, his brigade was halted as a reserve behind Mont St. Jean, but on the flight of the Dutch-Belgians he took the position indicated in the front line.

¹²⁵ "The most important mistake which the Duke of Wellington committed as to the actual fighting of the Battle of Waterloo," Kennedy

says in his general summary of the day, "was his overlooking the vast importance of retaining the possession at any cost of the farm and enclosures of La Haye Sainte. This farm was at the very centre of his position, and was on the great chaussée by which the French army so easily approached the position. These circumstances and Napoleon's known modes of attack indicated that the possession of this farm would be of the utmost value. Napoleon had from the first seen the vast importance of his possessing himself of this part of Wellington's field of battle, as is proved by his massing so very large a force immediately opposite to it, and by his establishing a battery of 74 guns to bear upon it." The Duke in after days acknowledged his error in this respect, and

drawn from Ompteda's (2d) brigade of the King's German Legion, which stood in rear of La Haye Sainte, upon the high ground at the north-western angle of the Charleroi and Wavre roads. Ompteda's brigade, Kielmansegge's 1st Hanoverian, and Sir Colin Halkett's 5th British brigades constituted Count Alten's 3d division, which—with Kruse's Nassau brigade, drawn up in the interval between Kielmansegge and Halkett, and to their rear—made the first portion of the right wing of the Allied front line. The remainder of the line as far as the Nivelles road was formed by Maitland's (1st) and Byng's (2d) brigades of Cooke's (1st) division of Guards. Of these, Byng's brigade stood upon the brow of the hill overlooking Hougomont, and acted as a reserve to the force holding the château and its enclosures, to which it had contributed 4 light companies. The defenders of Hougomont, besides the Guards, were a battalion of Nassau troops, a company of Hanoverian rifles, and 100 of Kielmansegge's Hanoverians. During the night the garden walls had been loopholed, and platforms and embankments erected behind them: the various entrances to the enclosures had been securely barricaded, except the gateway from the farm-yard to the avenue leading to the Nivelles road, which was kept open to afford communication with the Allied position.

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the mistake of diverting to Hougomont the workmen and tools that should have been employed all night at La Haye Sainte. The garrison, Kennedy adds, should have been 1,000 instead of 400, and he continues:—"The proposals for strengthening the place on the morning of the 18th were repudiated by the headquarters staff. When it was seen in the morning that a general action was inevitable, it was sug-

gested to them to place a British battalion in the buildings in addition to Baring's, but the proposal was negatived." = In curious accord with Kennedy's then unpublished estimate of the proper garrison was Thiers' assertion as of a fact:—"In the centre, on the Brussels road, was the farm of La Haye Sainte. . . . The defence of this place had been entrusted by the Duke to 1,000 men."

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Partly along this Hougomont avenue, and, crossing the Nivelles road, along the cross-road to Braine-la-Leude—that is, in advance of the general front line where it reached the Nivelles road, and down in the valley—was Mitchell's 4th British brigade, which belonged to Colville's 4th division, the two other brigades of which were at Hal. Mitchell's troops had protected their front by throwing an abatis across the Nivelles road, and they were supported by a squadron of the 15th British hussars. In the rear of Hougomont, to the right of the Nivelles road, the ridge of heights, which the Wavre road and Allied front line have hitherto followed, is abruptly terminated by the cross-valley that passes just west of Hougomont and runs northward to Merbe Braine; so that these heights end in a plateau that looks westwardly over the cross-valley. This plateau forms what Kennedy terms "a sort of natural citadel of ground, on which Wellington could, and did, throw back his right, and which he most judiciously held as a security for his right or as a position for a reserve force of infantry, to be used as the circumstances of the battle might indicate." Upon this ground, with its front at a right angle with the remainder of the Allied line, was posted Clinton's 2d division, of which the left brigade (Du Plat's 1st brigade of the King's German Legion) rested on the Nivelles road, adjoining Byng's Guards, while the right brigade (Hew Halkett's 3d Hanoverian) was near Merbe Braine, the interval between these two being filled by the third brigade of the division, Adam's 3d British.¹²⁶ Thus, so long as

¹²⁶ The diagram showing the position of the armies, as was explained in note 121, page 200, represents the Charleroi and Nivelles roads as parallel, whereas in fact they converge at (the village, not farm, of)

Mont St. Jean. By the folding operation suggested in that note, so as to make these two roads radial, but leaving Merbe Braine as it stands, Clinton's division would be brought into its actual position—that

the Guards should hold Hougomont, Wellington could draw up a strong line of battle from that point to Merbe Braine; while, if Napoleon did not attack the right flank, Clinton's division was available as a reserve to the remainder of the right wing. The troops thus far enumerated constituted the entire Anglo-Allied front line, with its several advanced posts.=The second line consisted wholly of British and German cavalry, of which Grant's 5th, Dörnberg's 3d, and Arentsschildt's 7th brigades stood in rear of Cooke's and Alten's infantry divisions. In the rear of the centre, and drawn up under the personal command of Lord Uxbridge, on either side of the Charleroi road, before Mont St. Jean, were the two brigades of heavy dragoons, Lord Edward Somerset's 1st or Household brigade of Guards, and Sir William Ponsonby's 2d brigade—which was also known as the "Union Brigade," since the regiments composing it, the Royals, Scots Greys, and Inniskillings, represented England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively. This second line stood upon the reverse slope of the heights or in the hollow in their rear, and were out of sight of the French and to a great extent out of reach of the direct line of their artillery.=In rear of the line of cavalry were, on the extreme right, the Brunswick corps, which had lost its leader, the Duke of Brunswick, at Quatre Bras, and was now commanded by Col. Olfermann: it consisted of both cavalry and infantry, and rested its right upon Merbe Braine, its left on the Nivelles road. On the left of the Nivelles road and in rear of Grant's cavalry were the Cumberland-Hanoverian hussars. Also in reserve, in rear of Mont St. Jean

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of a right angle with Cooke's division and the remainder of the Allied front line, and facing upon a line drawn from Hougomont to Merbe Braine.=Col. Hew Halkett, who is

mentioned above as commanding the 3d Hanoverian brigade, is to be distinguished from Gen. Sir Colin Halkett, who commanded the 5th British brigade of Alten's division.

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and out of sight of danger, was Collaert's division of three brigades of Dutch-Belgian cavalry. With the reserve was at first included that brigade of Sir John Lambert's which early in the action passed into the front line between Kempt and the Charleroi road. Otherwise the left wing of the army had no reserve, unless the Prussians looked for from Ohain might be so regarded.¹²⁷—The artillery of the front line was posted—8 guns with Perponcher's Dutch-Belgian division, about the eastern advanced posts in the valley; 6 guns with Vivian's hussar brigade; 6 guns upon the commanding height before Best's and Pack's brigades; 6 guns with Kempt's brigade; 12 guns with Alten's division; 12 with Cooke's; and 12 with Clinton's. The troops of horse-artillery were divided among the cavalry; and other batteries were at first in reserve, but were all brought forward during the course of the action and moved from point to point. By the same negligence and blundering which had left La Haye Sainte indefensible, the artillery was left unprotected, to encounter the full storm of fire from the greatly superior French batteries, and suffered terribly in consequence.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Hooper, accounting for Wellington's holding all his reserves on his right, after mentioning his apprehension that Napoleon might try to turn his position by way of Hal, continues:—"He had another reason for placing the bulk of his troops, horse and foot, on the west of the Charleroi road. The strongest part of the position was the right. There stood Hougomont; on that side ran the Nivelles road; there the troops were completely concealed. . . . Moreover, by posting his reserves on his right, he converted the position on that side into a citadel, whence he could send at pleasure reinforcements to

any part of the line through the perfectly open slopes in rear of the ridge. The ground on the right, therefore, was a stronghold, covering two of the great roads to the Belgian capital. The importance which Wellington attached to this flank may be estimated by the fact that it was here he posted Lord Hill, his most trusted lieutenant. Moreover, he expected the Prussians on the left."

¹²⁸ Napoleon, not satisfied by his night reconnoissances that Wellington had omitted to raise redoubts or entrenchments, deferred issuing his order of battle in the morning until he could assure himself on this point;

Besides the troops thus arrayed on the actual field of battle, the Duke of Wellington had detached to Hal and Tubize, some nine miles distant on his right, the corps of Prince Frederick of Orange and a British and a Hanoverian brigade from Sir Charles Colville's division—troops numbering in all some 18,000 men;—and, to keep up communication with them, he occupied Braine-la-Leude, three-quarters of a mile west of Merbe Braine, with Chassé's 3d division of Netherlands troops, 6669 strong. For thus voluntarily reducing his Waterloo army to a numerical inferiority to that of Napoleon, the Duke has been more generally reprehended than for any other circumstance relating to the battle; and it has been considered inexplicable—"his only fault," according to Charras—that he did not bring up Colville's division as soon as the gravity of the action became manifest, and thus avert the very critical position in which his army was placed after the French carried La Haye Sainte, in consequence of its destitution of reserves. This is accounted for—as is also his selection of a position with the Forest of Soignies in his rear—by the course he intended to pursue in the event of his being forced to retreat. Wellington, in 1821, visited the battlefield with Gen. Ziegler, then commandant at Namur, and, illustrating his remarks by a pencil sketch, said, "The last hour of the battle was

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Anglo-
Allied.
Position.

and it was not until Gen. Haxo had reconnoitred closely and reported that there were no field-works that the Emperor dictated his order. Among English writers on the battle, it was reserved for Col. Chesney to show that this deficiency did not arise from Wellington's oversight. He quotes from some unpublished memoranda by Sir H. Clinton upon the position of his

own (the 2d) division at Waterloo, as follows: "About 11 A.M. the Light Brigade and German Legion were ordered to furnish working parties to throw up breastworks to cover our guns; but when they arrived the officer with the entrenching tools was not present, and before these works were begun the enemy had commenced his attacks. So the guns had no cover."

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indeed a trying one to me. But I should not have retreated on the wood of Soignies, as Napoleon supposed, thinking I should fall back on Brussels and the sea, but I should have taken the direction to my left, that is toward Wavre, which would have given me the substantial advantage of drawing near the Prussian army." In this event, his right wing must have retired separately westward—that is, upon Hal, and probably under Lord Hill,—and would have united with the 18,000 men already in that quarter, while he joined Blücher with the remainder of his army. Thus his obstinate tenure of Hal is explained, and the terrors of the defile through Soignies are dispelled.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ This solution of a much-vexed question was reached by Chesney, and, if fully established, would end the tiresome disputation about Wellington's blunder in fearing an attack from the west, and his certain ruin if he had been driven into the wood. The Duke's adulators, on the one hand, have demonstrated that the wood was an excellent thing, precisely the kind of stronghold he would desire; and Napoleon's followers have caught up his dicta, like Thiers, who derides "the chimerical danger of an attack from the direction of the sea," declares it to be "a fear that never left his [Wellington's] mind, and which was quite unworthy of his military discernment," and dwells upon "the error committed in fighting in advance of the Forest of Soignies." = It is, however, to be added that Wellington's explanation to Gen. Ziegler, in 1821, that he purposed retreating eastwardly toward Blücher, does not harmonize with his sayings to others in the year previous. Gen. Ziegler's story was brought to light in the course of

the Continental criticisms evoked by Chesney's *Waterloo Lectures*, and was first set forth in the third edition of that work, published in 1874. In 1875 appeared the *Greville Memoirs*, the posthumous journal of Charles C. F. Greville, whose position as Clerk of the Council under George IV and William IV brought him into intimate relations with the Duke of Wellington. In that journal, under date of Wharfedale, Dec. 10, 1820, appears this entry:—"Yesterday we went to shoot at Sir Philip Brookes's. As we went in the carriage, the Duke talked a great deal about the Battle of Waterloo and different things relating to that campaign. He said that he had 50,000 men at Waterloo. He began the campaign with 85,000 men, lost 5,000 on the 16th, and had a corps of 20,000 at Hal, under Prince Frederick. He said that it was remarkable that nobody who had ever spoken of these operations had ever made mention of that corps, and Bonaparte was certainly ignorant of it. In this corps were

Napoleon's front line along the southern heights was slightly more extended than that of the Allies, his right

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French
Position.

the best of the Dutch troops; it had been placed there because the Duke expected the attack to be made on that side. He said that the French army was the best army that was ever seen, and that in the previous operations Bonaparte's march upon Belgium was the finest thing that ever was done—so rapid and so well combined. His object was to beat the armies in detail, and this object succeeded in so far that he attacked them separately; but from the extraordinary celerity with which the Allied armies were got together, he was not able to realise the advantages he had promised himself. The Duke says that they certainly were not prepared for this attack, as the French had previously broken up the roads by which their army advanced; but as it was in summer this did not render them impassable. He says that Bonaparte beat the Prussians in the most extraordinary way, as the battle [of Ligny] was gained in less than five hours; but that it would probably have been more complete if he had brought a greater number of troops into action, and not detached so large a body against the British corps. There were 40,000 men opposed to the Duke on the 16th, but he says that the attack was not so powerful as it ought to have been with such a force. The French had made a long march the day before the battle, and had driven in the Prussian posts in the evening. I asked him if he thought Bonaparte had committed any fault. He said he thought he had committed a fault in attacking him in the position of Waterloo;

that his object ought to have been to remove him as far as possible from the Prussian army, and that he ought, consequently, to have moved upon Hal, and to have attempted to penetrate by the same road by which the Duke had himself advanced. He had always calculated upon Bonaparte's doing this, and for this purpose he had posted 20,000 men under Prince Frederick at Hal. He said that the position at Waterloo was uncommonly strong, but that the strength of it consisted alone in the two farms of Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, both of which were admirably situated and adapted for defence. In Hougomont there were never more than from 300 to 500 men, who were reinforced as it was necessary; and although the French repeatedly attacked this point, and sometimes with not less than 20,000 men, they never could even approach it. Had they obtained possession of it, they could not have maintained it, as it was open on the one side to the whole fire of the English lines, while it was sheltered on the side toward the French. The Duke said the farm of La Haye Sainte was still better than that of Hougomont, and that it never could have been taken if the officer who was commanding there had not neglected to make an aperture through which ammunition could be conveyed to his garrison." = Sir Walter Scott's *Paul's Letters*, though by no means historical authority as to the details of the battle, may be trusted for the actual conversations which they quote, since they were written nearly at the time and place. According to these, Wel-

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French
Position.

wing being about a mile and an eighth in length from Frischermont to La Belle Alliance, and the left a mile and a quarter from the Charleroi road to a point beyond the Nivelles road. No better description of the formation of his army can be given than that which he himself dictated at St. Helena :—

“The army prepared for action, and marched forward in eleven columns. These eleven columns were designed—four to form the 1st line, four to form the 2d line, and three to form the 3d line. The four columns of the 1st line were—

“1st. That on the left, comprising the cavalry of the 2d corps.

“2d. Three divisions of infantry, forming the 2d corps.

“3d. Four divisions of infantry, forming the 1st corps.

“4th. The light cavalry of the 1st corps.

The four columns of the 2d line were—

“1st. That on the left, formed by Kellermann’s cuirassiers.

“2d. Two divisions of infantry from the 6th corps.

“3d. Two divisions of light cavalry: one from the 6th corps, commanded by Gen. Domont; the other a detachment from the corps under Gen. Pajol, commanded by Gen. Subervie.

“4th. Milhaud’s corps of cuirassiers.

The three columns of the 3d line were—

“1st. That on the left, formed by the division of horse-grenadiers and dragoons of the Guard, under Gen. Guyot.

“2d. The three divisions of the Old, Middle, and Young Guard, under Lieut.-Gens. Friant, Morand, and Duhesme.

lington, when asked what he should have done if the position had been carried, replied, “We had the wood behind us to retreat into?”—“And if the wood also was forced?”—“No, no; they could never have so beaten us but that we could have made good the wood against them.”= All which goes to discountenance the theory of a projected retreat eastward, except as an afterthought,

possibly in 1821.= With Greville’s version of the Duke’s saying about La Haye Sainte should be coupled this from *Paul’s Letters*. The absence of a back gate having been mentioned, “‘I ought to have thought of it,’ said the Duke of Wellington, ‘but,’ as he added, with a very unnecessary apology, ‘my mind could not embrace everything at once.’”

"3d. The chasseurs à cheval and the lancers of the Guard, under Lieut.-Gen. Lefebvre-Desnouettes. Waterloo.

"The artillery marched on the flanks of the columns: the parks and flying artillery formed the rear. French Position.

"At 9 o'clock the heads of the four columns forming the 1st line arrived at the spot where they were to deploy. At the same time were seen, at various distances, the seven other columns descending from the heights. They were in full march; the trumpets and drums sounded over the field; the music re-echoed airs which recalled to the soldiers the remembrance of a hundred victories; the earth seemed proud to bear so many brave men. The whole formed a magnificent spectacle, and must have struck the enemy with awe, who were so placed as to perceive every man, and to whom the army must have appeared double its real numbers. These eleven columns deployed not only without confusion, but with such accuracy that each man filled at once the place designed him by the commander-in-chief. Never had such masses moved with so much facility.

"The light cavalry of the 2d corps, which formed the first column on the left of the 1st line, deployed in three ranks on either side of the road between Nivelles and Brussels, nearly as high as the outskirts of the park of Hougomont, commanding on the left all the plain, and having its main guards placed on Braine-la-Leude, its battery of light artillery on the road to Nivelles. The 2d corps, under Gen. Reille, occupied the space between the roads of Nivelles and Charleroi, covering an extent of from 5,000 to 6,000 feet. Prince Jerome's division was stationed on the left, near the road to Nivelles and the wood of Hougomont; Gen. Foy held the centre; and Gen. Bachelu the right, reaching as far as the road to Charleroi, near to the farm of La Belle Alliance. Each division of infantry deployed in two lines, with an interval of 180 feet between them, having its artillery in front and its parks in the rear near the road to Nivelles. The 3d column, formed by the 1st corps and commanded by Count d'Erlon, had on its left La Belle Alliance, on the right of the road to Charleroi, and its right opposite the farm of La Haye, which was held by a strong detachment from the left wing of the enemy. Each division of its infantry

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French
Position.

deployed in two lines, its artillery being stationed in the intervals between the brigades. Its light cavalry, which formed the 4th column, deployed on its right in three lines, commanding La Haye and Frischermont, and with its outposts overlooking Ohain to observe the flankers of the enemy; and its light artillery was on the right.

"The 1st line was scarcely formed when the heads of the four columns of the 2d line arrived at the point from which they were to deploy. Kellermann's cuirassiers established themselves in two lines, with an interval of 180 feet between them, and at a distance of 600 feet from the second line of the 2d corps; having on their left the road to Nivelles, and their right extending as far as the road to Charleroi. The whole space occupied by them was about 6,600 feet; one of their batteries took up its position on the left, near the road to Nivelles, the other on the right, near the road to Charleroi. The 2d column, commanded by Lt.-Gen. Count de Lobau, placed itself 300 feet behind the second line of the 2d corps; it remained in column, compressed into two divisions, occupying a space of about 600 feet long and on the left of the road to Charleroi, with an interval of 60 feet between the two divisions, having its artillery on its left flank. The 3d column—that of its light cavalry commanded by Gen. Domont, and followed by the division under Gen. Subervie—disposed itself in close column of squadrons, having on its left the road to Charleroi, and opposite its infantry, from which it was separated only by that road: its light artillery was stationed on its right flank. The 4th column—that of Milhaud's corps of cuirassiers—deployed in two lines, with an interval of 180 feet between them, and 600 feet behind the second line of the 1st corps; having on its left the road to Charleroi and its right in the direction of Frischermont. This column occupied an extent of about 5,400 feet; its batteries were disposed in the centre and on the left near the road to Charleroi.

"Before this second line was fully formed the heads of the three columns of the reserve arrived at their points of deployment. The heavy cavalry of the Guard was stationed at a distance of 600 feet behind Kellermann's cuirassiers. It deployed in two lines with an interval of 180 feet between them, having the road

to Nivelles toward the left, the road to Charleroi on the right, with its artillery in the centre. The centre column—formed by the infantry of the Guard—deployed in six lines of 4 battalions each, with intervals of 60 feet between the ranks, on either side the road to Charleroi and somewhat in front of the farm of Rossome. The artillery batteries belonging to the different regiments were placed on the right and on the left; the horse and foot artillery of the reserve being behind the ranks. The 3d column—formed by the chasseurs à cheval and the lancers of the Guard—deployed in two lines, with an interval of 180 feet between them, and 600 feet behind Milhaud's cuirassiers, having on its left the road to Charleroi, its right extending toward Frischermont, and with the light artillery in the centre.

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French
Position.

“At half-past 10 o'clock, incredible though it may appear, the whole movement was completed, and all the troops were in their destined positions. The most profound silence pervaded the whole battlefield.

“The army was ranged in six lines, forming six double W's. The 1st and 2d lines were formed of infantry, and flanked by light cavalry; the 3d and 4th lines of cuirassiers; the 5th and 6th lines of cavalry of the Guard; with six lines of infantry of the Guard perpendicularly placed at the points of these six W's; and the 6th corps—compressed as a column—was placed perpendicularly to the lines occupied by the Guard; its infantry was on the left, and its cavalry on the right of the road. The roads to Charleroi and Nivelles were left free, as the means of communication by which the artillery of the reserve could reach with speed the various points of the line.”¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Napoleon's account of the formation of his army is singularly clear and precise, with the exception of the “six double W's,” which are difficult to trace in plans of the battle or in the imagination, but possibly appeared from some point from which he regarded the army. Thiers—who usually follows the St. Helena writings—gives up the W's, and is content to say that “the French

army had somewhat the form of a great fan gleaming, as the bayonets, sabres, and cuirasses of our men flashed back the sunlight.” The sun, as abundant testimony proves, was hidden by clouds at this time; and, if it had been shining, it would have been upon the backs of the French troops. Thiers further improves upon Napoleon by stating that “in less than an hour all these

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French
Position.

The sole line of retreat for the French was by the Charleroi road, and through the narrow defile of Genappe.¹³¹

Waterloo.
June 18.

2 A.M.

On the morning of the battle the chiefs of both armies were early astir. Napoleon—who, says Hooper, “could no longer, as in old times, sleep and wake at will”—had spent most of the night in the storm, exploring the field, watching that the English did not retreat, scanning the signs of the weather, and returning at intervals to the farm-house of Caillou to dry his clothes before the fire and dictate orders and dispatches. Wellington was dressed and at his desk, in Waterloo, at 2 o’clock in the morning, writing what might prove to be his last letters—letters to Sir Charles Stuart, the British minister at Brussels, desiring him to “keep the English quiet,” to let them be prepared to move, but to avoid a panic; to the Duke de Berri, recommending him to remove Louis XVIII and his court from Ghent to Antwerp, and explaining the precautions which had been taken for their protection; to the governor of Antwerp, directing him to “have the means of inundating the surrounding country ready;” and orders concerning the disposition and removal of the reserve ammunition and the preparation of apartments in every house throughout the neighbouring country for the wounded.¹³² The

fine troops had taken their appointed position,” although Napoleon explicitly says that the movement began at 9 A.M. and was completed at 10.30—another evidence that, whenever the great French historian’s statements with regard to time can be brought to a test, they prove to be false (see notes 74, p. 129; 86, p. 146; and 93 p. 158).

¹³¹ “It has been said,” observes

Charras, “that Napoleon had two roads by which to retreat—those of Nivelles and of Charleroi. This is an error; for the retreat by Nivelles would have given the army a direction so divergent as to compromise Grouchy’s detachment inordinately.”

¹³² One of the Duke’s precautions this morning was to cause the removal from Brussels to Antwerp of his niece, the lately-married wife of his

Duke's disposition of his troops had been made over night; but, while the cleaning of arms, the regimental inspections, and other preliminaries were going on, and his staff were seeing each brigade placed in its assigned position, he rode from point to point along his line, examining and modifying the arrangements.¹³³ Waterloo.
June 18. Napo-

secretary, Lord Fitz Roy Somerset. The many similar removals which occurred went far to promote that panic which Wellington deprecated, and for the adequate delineation of

which reference must again be made to Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. Scott's allusion to it in the *Field of Waterloo* is as follows:—

“Fair Brussels! then what thoughts were thine,
When ceaseless from the distant line
Continued thunders came!
Each burgher held his breath, to hear
Those forerunners of havoc near,
Of rapine and of flame.
What ghastly sights were thine to meet,
When rolling through thy stately street,
The wounded showed their mangled plight
In token of the unfinished fight,
And from each anguish-laden wain
The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain!
How often in the distant drum
Heard'st thou the fell invader come,
While Ruin, shouting to his band,
Shook high her torch and gory hand!—
Cheer thee, fair City! From yon stand,
Impatient, still his outstretch'd hand
Points to his prey in vain,
While maddening in his eager mood,
And all unwont to be withstood,
He fires the fight again.”

¹³³ Of the condition of things in the early morning Hooper gives this picture:—“The light of the sun was obscured by a thick mass of clouds. The woods were dripping with wet; the heavy crops were made heavier by the moisture; the ground was plashy and yielding, and in the depths of the valleys were wide pools. The air was filled with mist, and as far as the eye could see the

whole country was dark, silent, and dreary. Between the two armies stood the watchful sentries and vedettes, crossing the little ridges in front of Mont. St. Jean. No other sign of waking life was visible at daybreak; the Anglo-Allied army still remained in comfortless slumber. Soon the men awoke, and the plateau was covered with a moving mass. The soldiers looked ‘cold

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4 A.M.

8 A.M.

leon's solicitude about the weather had been so far relieved that, about dawn, the rain had ceased, though heavy clouds continued to overspread the sky until sunset. His own early movements were thus described by himself at St. Helena:—"At 8 o'clock . . . the Emperor's breakfast was served, at which several general officers were present: the Emperor said, 'The enemy's army is superior in numbers to ours by at least one-fourth; nevertheless we have at least ninety chances in our favour, and not ten against us.' 'Without doubt,' replied Marshal Ney, who entered the tent at this moment, 'if the Duke of Wellington were simple enough to wait for your Majesty; but I am come to announce that already his columns are in full retreat, and disappearing in the forest.' 'You are mistaken,' replied the Emperor; 'he is no longer in time; he would expose himself to certain destruction; the dice have been thrown, and the chances are in our favour.' Some artillery officers who had been exploring the plain now announced that the artillery could manœuvre, though under some difficulties, which would be sensibly diminished in an hour. The Emperor immediately mounted his horse, rode toward the riflemen stationed opposite La Haye Sainte, reconnoitred anew the enemy's line, and charged Gen. de Génie Haxo¹³⁴—an officer in his confi-

and blue, dirty and unshaven.' They rose from the sleep of the short night stiff and numbed, but, gradually shaking off the feeling of weariness, they fell heartily to work, cooking their breakfasts, cleaning their arms, feeding their horses, fetching wood, water, and straw. 'The sound of preparation,' says one [of Picton's officers] who was present, 'reminded me forcibly of the distant murmur of the waves of the sea beating against

some iron-bound coast.' Seventy thousand men were in confused irregular motion over the plateau." On the French side, meanwhile, Reille's corps were just coming up from Genappe, which they had not been able to pass the night before.

¹³⁴ The text preserves a felicity of some early translator of the *Mémoires* which has been generally embodied in accounts of the battle. Haxo was *Général de Génie*—gene-

dence—to approach still nearer, and ascertain if any redoubts or intrenchments had been raised. The General speedily returned and reported that he could perceive no traces whatever of field-works. The Emperor reflected a quarter of an hour, and then dictated the order of the battle, which two generals wrote while seated on the ground. The aides-de-camp took the orders to the different corps d'armée, who were under arms, and full of impatience and ardour.”¹³⁵ The orders

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ral of engineers; and the statement of his rank has been perverted into a part of his name.

¹³⁵ This “impatience and ardour” are vouched for by Thiers, who describes the troops as “exultant with joy and hope, notwithstanding the dreadful night they had passed, encumbered with mud, without fire, and almost without food, while the English army, having arrived some hours earlier than we, and being abundantly supplied with provisions, suffered but very little. Our men,” he continues, “had had time to prepare their soup in the morning, and were, besides, in a state of enthusiasm that made them insensible to every physical suffering, to every physical danger.” But the Erckmann-Chatrian conscript draws the picture as it was seen in the ranks:—“About 8 o'clock the wagons arrived with cartridges and hogsheads of brandy; each soldier received a double ration; with a crust of bread we might have done very well, but the bread was not there. You can imagine what sort of humour we were in. This was all we had that day. Immediately after the grand movement commenced. Regiments joined their brigades, brigades their divisions, and the divisions re-formed

their corps. . . . Our battalion joined Donzelot's division: the others had only 8 battalions, but his had 9. . . . Several persons have related that we were jubilant and were all singing, but it is false. Marching all night without rations, sleeping in the water, forbidden to light a fire, when preparing for showers of grape and canister, all this took away any inclination to sing. We were glad to pull our shoes out of the holes in which they were buried at every step, and, chilled and drenched to our waists by the wet grain, the hardiest and most courageous among us wore a discontented air. It is true that the bands played marches for their regiments, that the trumpets of the cavalry, the drums of the infantry, and the trombones mingled their tones and produced a terrible effect, as they do always. . . . As for me, I never heard any one sing either at Leipzig or Waterloo.”= The allusion to the rations of brandy at the outset of the preceding quotation is noteworthy. As long before as the German campaign of 1813 the French practice in this respect had been pointed out by Ompteda (not the officer in the King's German Legion) in a letter to Baron Stein, which is printed in Prof. Seeley's

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A.M.

were as already quoted in the description of the French position; and the Grand Army at once began to move into its lines—a movement which Kennedy, who watched it, says “was to those on the Allied position who witnessed it highly interesting, and, as a sight, majestic and beautiful.” This parade—as imposing as its designer’s description shows that he meant it to be—was intended both to inspirit his own soldiers by the full disclosure of their strength, and to work upon the nerves of the unsound corps in the Allied army, some of which he had tampered with, but which Wellington had so distributed among more trustworthy troops as to frustrate any attempt at defection to the enemy. Napoleon, however, has been censured for spending in idle display, as his critics term it, half of the day, when every hour was bringing nearer to Wellington the Prussian support on which he relied. But, besides that up to this time Napoleon clearly had no suspicion of Blücher’s cross-march, he and his followers have claimed that it was

Life of the Prussian statesman. He says: “The French troops, consisting in great part of young soldiers, fought in much the same way as the troops that were hastily raised in the first days of the Revolution. Now, as then, brandy is served out to the soldiers, and particularly to the cavalry, a little while before an attack is to take place, and the troops already understand it as the sign of an approaching engagement with the enemy. Their first attack is then made with great impetuosity, but if the first shock is firmly met confusion soon begins in the French ranks.” A verification of this was afforded by the onset of drunken French lancers from the street of Genappe on the afternoon before (see text, page 135); and so much does it seem to

be a matter of course that Lamar-tine assumes that the rash charges of the British heavy cavalry at Waterloo were due to their having been previously fired by drink. As a matter of fact, the rations of brandy served out to the French had their equivalent in the Anglo-Allied army. The Earl of Albemarle gives this bit of his experience:—“Prior to taking up our position for the night [of June 17], the regiment filed past a large tubful of gin. Every officer and man was, in turn, presented with a little tin pot full. No fermented liquor that has since passed my lips could vie with that delicious *schnapps*. As soon as each man was served the precious contents that remained in the tub were tilted over on to the ground.”

necessary for him to delay the attack until the ground hardened sufficiently for the movement of his cavalry and artillery; his apologists have further represented that he had no more ammunition than would suffice for eight hours of fighting; and there can be little doubt that his physical condition may have indisposed him, on this day as on the previous ones, to personal exertion.¹³⁶ At all events—having seen the movement of the troops begun, having shown himself to his soldiers, and after sending to Grouchy an order directing him to continue his march on Wavre¹³⁷—the Emperor

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IO A.M.

¹³⁶ Drouot, chief of artillery of the Guard, afterwards took upon himself the blame for this delay. Thiers quotes this from some notes written by Col. Combes-Brassard, Lobau's chief of staff, who says:—"One day he [Drouot] said to me, with the air of a man who wished to relieve an oppressed mind, 'The more I think of that battle the more I consider myself as one of the causes of its being lost.' 'You, General! when did the generous devotion of a noble friendship for one's master go further than yours?' 'I shall explain, Colonel. . . . The Emperor,' he continued, 'was aware of the disposition of the enemy's forces at the break of day: his plan was decided on: he intended to commence the battle at 8 or 9 in the morning at the latest. I observed to him that the ground was so broken up by the rain that the movements of the artillery would be very slow, an inconvenience that would be done away with by a delay of two or three hours. The Emperor consented to make this fatal delay. Had he disregarded my advice, Wellington would have been attacked at 7, beaten at 10, the victory would have


been completed at noon, and Blücher, not arriving until 5, would have fallen into the hands of a victorious army. We did not commence the attack until noon, and left all the chance of success to the enemy.'" Apropos of Drouot's self-censure, Chesney observes, "Napoleon had also been bred an artilleryman, had served as an artillery general, had made more use of guns under his own eye than any commander that ever lived. Moreover, he had in his hand what Drouot could not grasp, the strings of the strategic combinations of the whole theatre of war." =The story that Napoleon's ammunition had been so exhausted by Ligny and Quatre Bras that only eight hours' supply remained is to be found in Capt. J. W. Pringle's *Remarks on the Campaign of 1815*, which is included as an appendix in Scott's *Life of Napoleon*. =As to Napoleon's health, it will be referred to, in the words of those who attended him, in several of the following notes, which corroborate what has already been said upon the subject in general terms. (See note, p. 31.)

¹³⁷ See note 88, p. 149.

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sought rest before beginning the battle. "Napoleon," says Thiers, "who had passed the night wading through the mud while making his reconnoissances, and who had slept but three hours since he left Ligny at 5 o'clock on the morning of the previous day, now flung himself upon his camp-bed. His brother Jerome was with him at the time. 'It is 10 o'clock,' he said, 'and I will sleep until 11. I shall certainly wake, but in any case rouse me yourself; for these,' he added, pointing to the officers, 'would not dare venture to disturb me.' Having said this, he laid his head upon his slight pillow and was soon sound asleep."¹³⁸ = It was during this interval

¹³⁸ This remark of Napoleon's to his brother exactly accords with the impossibility which Grouchy twice experienced of having Napoleon awakened at Fleurus to sanction the pursuit of the Prussians, on the night of June 16th and on the morning of the 17th until 8 A.M.—not 5 A.M., as Thiers again misstates the hour. (See note 63, page 115, and text, page 127.) = In direct conflict with Napoleon's own account of his morning hours, and with Thiers', is the story given by the Earl of Albemarle in his *Fifty Years of my Life*, on the authority of Gudin, whose credibility Thiers has lauded in a note previously quoted (page 33), and whom on a later page he has described as accompanying the Emperor on his midnight survey of the battlefield. Lord Albemarle says, "My son Lord Bury, who was in 1870 the representative at Rouen of the Society for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded in the war then raging between France and Prussia, became acquainted there with Gen. Gudin, the commandant of the garrison. This officer, who was *page d'honneur*

in waiting upon the first Napoleon at Waterloo, told Bury that the Emperor ordered his horses to be ready at 7 in the morning. The order was obeyed, but time wore away, and the Emperor made no sign. At last the Grand Ecuyer came down to the assembled staff and told them that his Imperial Majesty was in his room, that he spoke to no one, that he was seated in a pondering attitude which forbade question or interruption. It was nearly noon when the Emperor descended the ladder that led to the sleeping-room, and rode away.—'Do you know, mon Général,' asked Bury, 'why the Emperor was so dilatory? He must have known—what all the world knows now—that minutes were of the highest importance to him on that day.'—'Certainement,' answered the General, 'tout le monde se le disait. Il avait joué son coup et—il le savait perdu.' Gudin also told Bury that when Napoleon came down from his apartment to mount his horse, the equerry in waiting had stolen away to get some breakfast: the duty therefore of assisting the Emperor to mount devolved upon

before the action began that a Prussian patrol notified the English cavalry pickets near Smohain that Bülow was approaching St. Lambert with his corps—the fact being that it was simply Bülow's advanced guard which was thus prematurely announced, his main body having been seriously detained in its march. Hence the Duke of Wellington looked for the arrival of the Prussians several hours before they could really appear.¹³⁹ = Napoleon, waking at the hour he had named without being called, joined his officers and established himself on

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Gudin, who gave him such a vigorous hoist under the elbow that his Majesty nearly rolled off on the other side. 'Petit imbécile,' exclaimed Napoleon, 'va-t-en à tous les diables,' and rode off, leaving the unlucky page, overwhelmed with confusion, to mount and to ride sadly on in the rear. They had ridden a few hundred yards when Gudin saw the staff open right and left, and the Emperor came riding back. 'Mon enfant,' said he, putting his hand kindly on the lad's shoulder, 'quand vous aidez un homme de ma taille à monter, il faut le faire doucement.'—The recollection of the implied apology, and the kindness which induced one in Napoleon's position to think at such a moment of a young man's feelings, brought tears into the old General's eyes as he told my son the story." = It is not wholly impossible that the scenes of Napoleon's meeting his officers at breakfast, dictating the order of the army, etc., may have taken place without Gudin's knowledge, and that the delay the latter describes may have been during such a period of retirement as is described by Thiers.

¹³⁹ In reference to the delay in Bülow's coming up, see text, page

154 *et seq.* = During this period of Napoleon's repose, Wellington continued his survey of his own lines, of which Hooper gives this incident:—"Feeling the full importance of the château of Hougomont and its enclosures, he rode thither, . . . observing the dispositions of the French on that side. While here, according to an anecdote which Mr. Rogers has preserved, he remarked that the Nassau regiment was disposed to flinch from its forward position. 'And when I remonstrated with them,' he continues, 'they said, in excuse, that the French were in such force near there. It was to no purpose that I pointed to our Guards on the right. It would not do; and so bewildered were they, that they sent a few shots after me as I rode off. "And with these men," I said to the Corps Diplomatique, who were with me, "with these men I am to win the battle." They shrugged their shoulders.' Returning from Hougomont, the Duke rode along the whole line, followed by the diplomatic gentlemen. Among the latter were Baron Vincent, Count Pozzo di Borgo, Gen. Alava, Baron Müffling, and Count Francisco de Sales."

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the place of observation he had selected—a mound of earth near La Belle Alliance, where his maps were spread on a table, and his horses stood saddled near by. His plan of attack, as stated by Thiers, was “first to seize the three advanced posts—the château de Goumont [Hougomont] on the left, the Haye Sainte farm in the centre, and the Papelotte and La Haye farms on the right,—then to send his right wing supported by his entire reserve to attack the English left, weak both in position and numbers, force it on the centre, which occupied the Brussels road, take possession of this road, the only passage through the Forest of Soignies, and thus compel the British army to enter the wood, . . . so cutting off the English from the Prussians who in all probability, if not certainly, were at Wavre.” Napoleon gave the order, and a discharge of artillery began the battle.¹⁴⁰

11.30 A.M.

¹⁴⁰ One of the much-repeated traditions about the battle of Waterloo is that the hour of its commencement is involved in doubt, and, by way of proof, much has been said as to the hours at which persons at a distance did or did not hear the cannonade. The troops at Hal—only 8 miles off to the west—heard nothing of it all day, and remained ignorant that the battle had taken place until the next morning. Grouchy and his officers heard it at Sart-les-Walhain—13 miles off to the east—at 11.30 A.M. (see page 160, and note ⁹⁴, same page), for the question of time was at once discussed by them with reference to their proposed cross-march. Kennedy, who was near La Haye Sainte, and closely observing what passed, wrote: “The first firing that took place at the battle of Waterloo was at half-past 11 o’clock A.M.; the

first cannon shot then fired marked exactly the commencement of this great contest.” Sir John Sinclair, who visited the field soon after the campaign, and obtained from the actors in the battle materials for his paper on *The Defence of Hougomont*, says, “The action commenced at 35 minutes past 11 o’clock, as appears from the information of an officer who looked at his watch (which he was satisfied was correct as to time) as soon as the first gun was fired.” “Captain Diggle,” in the story quoted by Hooper, “a cool old officer of the Peninsula, took out his watch, turned to his subaltern officer, Gawler, who was one of the same Peninsular mould, and (on hearing the first cannon-shot) quietly remarked, ‘There it goes.’ The hands of the watch marked 20 minutes past 11.” Definite statements like these are sufficient to out-

[*Note on the divisions of the Battle of Waterloo.*—To understand this battle clearly, it must be premised that it consisted of five distinct phases, marked by as many attacks

weigh the loose guesses as to the hour afterwards made by those who did not note it at the time, and thus occasioned a very unprofitable controversy. Brialmont—who himself gives 11.30 as the hour—has this summary of the opinions of others:—“Wellington and Gneisenau fix the commencement of the battle about 10; Alava and Vaudoncourt at half-past 11; Napoleon and Drouot at 12; and Marshal Ney and Colonel Heymès at 1.” As to Ney and Heymès, it will be seen that their share in the battle did commence about 1—long after Hougomont was attacked.= With the circumstance mentioned at the outset of this note—that the Waterloo cannonade was not heard at Hal, 8 miles to the west, but was heard at Sart-les-Walhain, 13 miles to the east—readers interested in acoustics will do well to combine the story told by Sir Edward Cust in his *Annals of the Wars of the Nineteenth Century*.

After remarking that a salute in honour of the victory at Ligny was being fired by the Parisians at the Invalides when the cannonade was opening at Waterloo, he goes on to say: “The air must have been full of gunpowder on the morning of the celebrated 18th of June, . . . and to such a wondrous extent were the re-echoes carried this day, owing to some peculiarity of atmosphere, that the rector of Margate assured me the reverberation was heard on the English coast near that watering-place.” = Among the moralizings upon Waterloo at the time, much was said about its having been fought upon a Sunday—a sufficient cause, some declared it, for the defeat of the assailant. Macaulay, as an undergraduate at Cambridge in 1820, treated the suggestion poetically. The subject for the Chancellor's Prize for that year was *Waterloo*, and he sent in a poem, of which these are the opening lines:—

“It was the Sabbath morn. How calm and fair
Is the blest dawning of the day of prayer!
Who hath not felt how fancy's mystic power
With holier beauty decks that solemn hour;
A softer lustre in its sunshine sees,
And hears a softer music in its breeze?
Who hath not dreamed that even the skylark's throat
Hails that sweet morning with a gentler note?
Fair morn, how gaily shone thy dawning smile
On the green valleys of my native isle!
How gladly many a spire's resounding height
With peals of transport hailed thy new-born light!
Ah! little thought the peasant then, who blest
The peaceful hour of consecrated rest,
And heard the rustic temple's arch prolong
The simple cadence of the hallowed song,

made by Napoleon upon the Anglo-Allied army. These attacks were :—

I. Reille's corps attacked Hougomont : began at 11.30 A.M., continued throughout the day.

II. D'Erlon's corps attacked the Allied left and centre : began at 2.30 P.M., continued till 3.30 P.M.

III. French cavalry attacked the Allied right : began at 4 P.M., continued till 6 P.M.

IV. Ney attacked the Allied centre, taking La Haye Sainte : began at 6 P.M., continued till 7.30 P.M.

V. Last charge of the Imperial Guard : began at 7.30 P.M. Kennedy's division of the battle in this manner rendered intelligible, for the first time, the aggregation of separate conflicts which previous narrators had left uncorrelated and therefore bewildering. His method is followed in the subsequent pages.¹⁴¹—The Prussian operations against the French right flank, though contemporaneous with the Anglo-Allied defence, were for a time wholly independent of it. They are

That the same sun illumed a gory field,
Where wilder song and sterner music pealed ;
Where many a yell unholy rent the air,
And many a hand was raised—but not in prayer."

The poem did not take the prize, and Macaulay's biographer remarks that the lines "were pretty and simple enough to ruin his chance in an academical competition." The poem to which the prize was given is quoted in full hereafter (page 444).

¹⁴¹ Kennedy's description of the portions of the battle above tabulated is as follows :—"The battle of Waterloo had this distinctive character, that it was divided into five separate attacks ; four of which were isolated attacks, and one only, that is the last, was general on the whole Anglo-Allied line : those five attacks were distinct, and clearly separated from each other by periods of suspension of any close attacks. In fact, it can scarcely be said that figurative lan-

guage is used in describing the action by saying that the battle was a great drama in five acts, with distinct and well-defined intervals, those intervals being marked simply by the firing of the batteries, without that fire being accompanied by any other action of the troops. This isolation of the attacks . . . was a matter of the greatest importance as regarded the result of the action ; and the five great acts—that is, the five great attacks made by Napoleon—must be clearly classed in the mind of the reader, and distinctly separated from each other : their time of commencement, their duration, and their comparative importance must be marked and remembered."

detailed in their proper order chronologically, and are distinguished by a typographical indication from the main battle.]

The French opened the battle with the fire of 120 cannon, drawn up principally in front of their right wing and centre, and so directed as to converge upon the Allied centre and left, where the principal attack was to be delivered. But a preliminary attack was to be made from the French left upon Hougomont; and in this part of the field a portion of Reille's batteries, with those of Piré's and Kellermann's horse-artillery—some 40 pieces—opened upon the Allied right wing and the wood and château of Hougomont. The Allied batteries along the front ridge were prompt in rejoining; the intervals between the reports became less and less; and, as the French columns began to move, the intervals disappeared, and the cannonade became a continuous roar.

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I. Attack upon Hougomont.

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Reille's (2d) corps—composed of the divisions of Bachelu, Foy, and Prince Jerome¹⁴²—was charged with the taking of Hougomont. Jerome moved first to the attack, a column from the right of his division, preceded by a swarm of skirmishers, advancing upon the south-western border of the wood. The Nassau battalion and Hanoverian riflemen who defended it opened a brisk fire upon them from the cover of the trees and the outer edge; but the French threw themselves into the wood, and their leading brigade, Bauduin's, came up in such numbers as to possess themselves of a considerable portion of the wood, while other troops from Foy's division entered the fields on its right, and the

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¹⁴² As at Quatre Bras, Guilleminot was the real commander of the division called Jerome's.

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assailants were rapidly making their way through the southern enclosures. At this moment the Duke of Wellington rode up to Major Bull's howitzer battery, stationed on the Allied ridge in rear of the Hougomont orchard, and gave orders to dislodge the enemy with shells. An effective fire from the battery checked their progress;¹⁴³ the light companies of the 1st brigade of Guards advanced from the orchard into the fields, while on their right those of the 2d brigade came from the lane and courts of the château to the support of the Hanoverians and Nassauers in the wood; and, after a sharp encounter, in which the French General Bauduin fell, the Guards and their allies regained both fields and wood.=Jerome then brought forward fresh columns to renew the attack, directing them against the western part of the wood, while troops from Foy's division were to move simultaneously against its southern front. The cannonade now became general on both sides—the Allies firing upon the advancing French columns, the French upon the English batteries themselves. The Allied guns on the right were directed up the valley beyond Hougomont, against Jerome's troops as they approached the west of the wood; and they were

¹⁴³ The narrative in the text follows that of Siborne: it is slightly varied by Sir Augustus Frazer, who tells that, on joining Wellington behind Hougomont, he perceived what progress the French were making in the wood, and sent for Bull's howitzer battery, reporting to the Duke that he had done so. "The howitzer troop came up," continues Frazer; "and came up handsomely: their very appearance encouraged the remainder of the division of the Guards, then lying down to be sheltered from the fire. The Duke said,

'Colonel Frazer, you are going to do a delicate thing; can you depend upon the force of your howitzers? Part of the wood is held by our troops, part by the enemy,' and his Grace calmly explained what I already knew. I answered that I could perfectly depend upon the troop; and, after speaking to Major Bull and all his officers, and seeing that they too perfectly understood their orders, the troop commenced its fire, and in less than ten minutes the enemy was driven from the wood."

answered by Piré's horse-battery from the brow of the height where the Nivelles road intersects it. The columns of Jerome and Foy meanwhile penetrated into the wood, where they encountered a desperate resistance from the British Guards, who, though outnumbered, retired only from tree to tree as they were successively dislodged, and now and then made a resolute stand. But the contest was unequal; the number of the Guards rapidly diminished, as those of their assailants increased; and they were compelled to withdraw from the wood—those of the 1st regiment retiring into the orchard, while the men of the Coldstream and the 3d regiments took shelter in the lane along the west of the château and behind a haystack at the south-west angle of the buildings. The pursuing French followed in several directions—(a) those on the right against the hedge that concealed the garden wall; (b) others against the buildings and their courts; while (c) those most to the left passed on beyond the western boundary of Hougomont and into its rear. (a) The right column, Soy's brigade, rushed at a charging pace upon what they took to be a simple hedge; but their leaders had no sooner passed it than they encountered a deadly fire from the loopholed wall 30 yards distant, and those who followed only did so to perish before this impregnable stronghold which they had no means of escalading, and the most resolute could do no better than seek such cover as the apple trees and hedges afforded, and waste their bullets upon the impenetrable wall. From the rear the French could only see that their columns passed into the wood and did not return, so that their success was taken for granted, and new columns were sent forward in their support. Upon these and upon the troops already in the wood Bull's battery re-opened so tremendous a fire of shells that the French were

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thrown into disorder, which was completed by the reappearance of the Guards from the enclosures, who again possessed themselves for a time of the northern portion of the wood. But Bull's guns were now exposed not only to the fire of those opposite them, but were enfiladed by Piré's battery on the Nivelles road, and became unable to repress the French infantry supports which came up in great numbers to the relief of their comrades in the wood, and drove the Guards once more to their shelter on the flanks of the enclosures. (b) The French of Bauduin's brigade, who had moved against the buildings, dislodged that force of the 3d and Coldstream regiments which held the mouth of the lane, by setting fire to the haystack that gave them cover; yet the Guards held their ground within the lane itself until they found themselves outflanked and in danger of being surrounded. They then withdrew rapidly into the farm-yard through the gateway that had been left open on the side of the Allied position, and had succeeded in closing the gate and partially barricading it with whatever heavy objects lay near at hand, when the French burst it open and rushed into the yard. The defenders poured in a fire from such cover as they could find, and then threw themselves upon the invaders in a hand-to-hand struggle. The English bore down their assailants; some of their officers and a sergeant by personal strength closed the gate upon those who surged against it; the intruders perished; and the garrison exerted themselves to the utmost to complete the barricade against the renewal of the attack.¹⁴⁴ They were still piling logs of timber behind

¹⁴⁴ The five intrepid men who won great glory by closing the gate, and who all survived to enjoy their honours, were Lieut.-Col. Macdonnell, Capt. Wyndham, Ensigns

Gooch and Hervey, and Sergeant Graham, all of the Coldstream Guards. The sergeant distinguished himself further during this defence, as will be recorded in a subsequent

the gate when another attempt was made to drive it in: this proved ineffectual, and a grenadier had the temerity to climb the wall to open it from the inside; he was seen by Capt. Wyndham, who was holding Graham's musket while the sergeant brought timber: pointing him out, the captain gave the gun to Graham, who dropped his log, fired, and killed his man, who fell just as relief came from outside to end this attack.

(c) The attacking column which had passed on the west of Hougomont crossed the avenue leading from it to the Nivelles road, and established themselves in some ground overgrown with brushwood between the avenue and the right of the Allied position. This brought

note.—Thiers' account of the *mêlée* at the farm-yard is as follows:—"Col. Cubières, commanding the 1st light infantry, and who had distinguished himself two days before in the attack on the Wood of Bossu, had turned the buildings under a fearful fire from the plateau. Seeing a back door leading into the yard of the château, he was determined to force it. Sub-Lieut. Legros, a brave man, formerly a sub-officer of engineers, and whom his comrades called *l'Enfonceur*, seizing a hatchet, forced the door and entered the yard at the head of a few brave fellows. The post was ours, and we should have kept it, but that Lieut.-Col. Macdonnell, dashing forward at the head of the English Guards, succeeded in repelling our men and closing the door, and so saved the Château de Goumont. The brave Legros was left dead on the field. Col. Cubières, who had been wounded . . . at Quatre Bras, was at this moment struck by several shots, and fell under his horse; he was about being killed by the English, but,

touched by his valour and age, they spared his life and bore him bleeding from the field. The French were therefore compelled to return to the border of the wood without having conquered this fatal mass of buildings."=The importance which was attached to the holding of Hougomont is attested by this expression in Lord Dudley's *Letters*:—"This Belgian yeoman's garden wall was the safeguard of Europe, and the destiny of mankind perhaps turned upon the possession of his house."=As to the gateway which was so stubbornly struggled for, a view of it from the interior of the yard is given in vol. viii. of Charles Knight's *Popular History of England*, which shows very clearly how the deep, narrow entrance might be held by a handful of valiant men against hundreds of assailants: there is also in the same chapter an illustration of the massive garden-wall. Except for these pictures, Knight's account of the battle is thoroughly inaccurate and valueless.

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them under the fire of Lieut.-Col. Smith's horse-battery, which had been pushed forward into the valley on the west of the Nivelles road, both to check the advance of the French infantry and to answer that battery of Piré's which had been directed against Bull's howitzers, and which Smith had succeeded in silencing. The French skirmishers crept up under cover of the underbrush and the tall grain, within short musket-shot of the flank of Smith's battery, and opened so destructive a fire against its horses and gunners that it was disabled for present use and obliged to withdraw into a "hollow-way" in its rear in order to refit. But this success of the French was checked by four companies of the Coldstream Guards, under Lieut.-Col. Woodford, who advanced from the Allied position and drove them back to the farm-yard wall, where they united with the party engaged in attacking the gate, and made a stand. Here Woodford charged them with his four companies in line, and dispersed them; he then entered the farm-yard with a portion of his reinforcement, while the remainder occupied the enclosures between Hougomont and the Nivelles road.=The French had now been foiled in all their attempts against the buildings and their walled enclosures; but they were strong in numbers and resolute, and they made a push in still a new direction, further to their right, hoping to turn the stronghold on its eastern side. Forcing a gap through the hedge dividing the wood from the orchard, a column began to pour through the opening, when they were encountered by Lord Saltoun with the light companies of the first brigade of Guards, who cleared the orchard after a sharp conflict. But the French now swarmed in the wood, and they mustered in overwhelming numbers in this quarter. While some renewed the attack upon the orchard on its southern front, and

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drove back Saltoun's Guards from tree to tree until they forced them to take refuge in the "hollow-way" in the rear of its northern hedge, another large body moved along the eastern hedge of the orchard, as if to gain its rear. These latter troops came directly under the observation of Alten's division, and its light companies were about forming to attack them, when the Prince of Orange, who had just ridden forward to observe the French operations, stopped their advance, saying, "No, don't stir—the Duke is sure to see that movement, and will take some step to counteract it." Almost as he spoke, two companies of the 3d regiment of Guards left their position on the heights and moved down along the hedge to meet the enemy. As they came up on Saltoun's left, he also resumed the offensive and re-entered the orchard, and the two parties of Guards, charging in line on either side of the hedge, and seconded by the flank fire which swept the orchard from the eastern garden-wall, pushed back the assailants into the wood. The two reinforcing companies joined their comrades within the Hougomont enclosure; and thus, at the close of what may be termed the first phase of the battle, the English remained masters of the buildings and courts, the garden, and the orchard,—the French having succeeded, after immense losses, in holding possession of the wood only.

Reille never intended persisting in the struggle for Hougomont at the cost of such murderous sacrifice of men as it involved. So Thiers says, adding, "He ordered that the desperate efforts made to take these buildings should cease, but did not look himself to the execution of his orders; and the generals of the brigades and divisions, carried away by their own ardour and that of their men, resolved to conquer both farm and château." The ruinous contest, accordingly,

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continued to rage throughout the day, most destructive but absolutely fruitless.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ Thiers, in summarizing the causes of the defeat, returns to the subject, as follows:—"The Château de Goumont on our left ought to have been attacked certainly, but it ought to have been beaten down by cannon, not attacked by men, an attempt which weakened the left wing of our army. These details were concealed from Napoleon by the wood of Goumont, and it was greatly to be regretted that Gen. Reille did not keep sufficiently near the scene of action to prevent this useless expenditure of human life. It is evident that after the conquest of the wood the attack ought to have ceased, and Jerome's, Foy's, Ney's[P?], and Bachelu's brave divisions reserved for the attack on the plateau of Mont St. Jean, the principal scene of operation." Charras says of the fight at Hougomont, "This attack was meant to engross the attention of the English general at this point, to disquiet him, and thus to favour the principal operation, which was to be directed against his left wing. This was a diversion; but, to accomplish the desired effect, it was not indispensable that it should be pushed so far as the capture of the position. . . . Commanded, at a very short distance, by the crest of the plateau of Mont St. Jean, the château of Hougomont could not have been tenable by our troops if they had taken it. . . . Until 5 o'clock the entire corps of Reille continued piling itself up before a position which was constantly defended by forces numerically inferior, in such sort that the diversion proved to be to the enemy's advan-

tage, and infantry was lacking for the support of our cavalry led by Ney upon the plateau. . . . The attack, moreover, was conducted with the strangest improvidence. . . . It was only after three hours of fighting, after the useless sacrifice of a crowd of brave men, that any one took the trouble to concentrate the fire of a few howitzers upon its walls. . . . The walls [of the garden] might have been carried in good season, if any one had taken the common precaution of supplying the sappers of the engineer corps with a few petards and some sacks of powder."—Other French writers have affirmed that Napoleon was kept in ignorance of the walled garden, and deceived as to other physical features of the field. Victor Hugo's Waterloo passage contains a chapter entitled *The Emperor asks the Guide a Question*, which describes Napoleon as studying the field, and continues, "He bent down and spoke in a low voice to the guide Lacoste. The guide shook his head with a probably perfidious negative."—This Lacoste—or De Coste or De Costar, for his name is given in many shapes—ought to be disposed of at the outset of the Waterloo narrative. He was a peasant, living in one of the houses near La Belle Alliance, who secreted himself during the battle, but afterwards bestowed hush-money upon his fellow-hiding, and evolved from this business, for the delectation of tourists, an account of the events of the day, the foundation of which was that he never for a moment left the side of Napoleon. He became the favourite guide of

The troops of the French right wing had remained quiet during the period of this first attack, except that, soon after its commencement, a body of cavalry rode forward from the neighbourhood of Papelotte toward the commanding knoll on the heights of the Allied position, upon which the artillery of Best's Hanoverian brigade was drawn up. The knoll had the appearance, from the other side of the valley, of being an intrenched earthwork, and the reconnoissance was made to ascertain whether it was so; but when Best formed his brigade into battalion squares and prepared to resist cavalry, the horsemen returned whence they came without attacking. Otherwise, the cavalry and infantry on the right were engaged in preparation for

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the earlier English tourists—of Scott, Southey, Byron, and hundreds of others,—through the medium of whose pens he became one of the most copious contributors to what Quinet afterwards entitled *La Légende Napoléonienne*,—rivalling in the audacity of his inventions Thiers or even Napoleon himself. Scarcely any narrative of Waterloo is free from the figments of De Costar's fertile imagination: not only the earlier writers, Scott, Lockhart, Alison, and those of their time, quote him, but the carefully exact Siborne describes him as Napoleon's guide, and the sceptical Victor Hugo treats him as a historical personage. The implicit confidence reposed in him by Scott is especially touching. Describing the visit of *Paul's Letters* to Waterloo, he says, "Honest John de Coster, the Flemish peasant, whom Bonaparte has made immortal by pressing into his service [*sic*] as a guide, . . . repeated with great accuracy the same simple

tale to all who desired to hear him." A few years after this Archbishop Whately wrote in his *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Bonaparte* (in 1819), "This same Lacoste has been suspected by others, besides me, of having never been near the great man, and having fabricated the whole story for the sake of making a gain of the credulity of travellers." Scott, however, remained true to his honest peasant as late as the publication of his *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, in 1827, in which he appends to his narrative of Waterloo—a narrative just about as truthful as might consequently be expected—this footnote:—"Our informer on these points was Lacoste, a Flemish peasant, who was compelled to act as Buonaparte's guide, remained with him during the whole action, and accompanied him to Charleroi. He seemed a shrewd, sensible man in his way, and told his story with the utmost simplicity." His "simplicity" resembled that of Lucy in *The Rivals*.

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the attack which they were to make upon the Allied left and centre.

The Prussians during this time first showed themselves far to the French right on the heights of St. Lambert, and arrested the delivery of the

*The Prussian
approach.*

second attack until Napoleon could assure

himself whether the new-comer was Blücher or Grouchy.¹⁴⁶ He at once despatched Gen. Domont, with his own and Subervie's divisions of light cavalry, instructing him to ascertain and report immediately what these troops were, to expedite their march if they were friends, and to oppose it if they proved to be Prussians. The capture of a Prussian hussar bearing a dispatch from Bülow to Wellington soon informed Napoleon that the Prussian 1st corps, 30,000 strong, and followed by the remainder of their army, were approaching his right flank. He immediately communicated this alarming fact to Grouchy, in a postscript to orders already prepared,¹⁴⁷ calling upon him for the support of his wing of the Grand Army; and he, somewhat later, moved toward the menaced point the two remaining infantry divisions of Lobau's corps—Jeannin's and Simmer's, that of Teste being with Grouchy. This detachment deranged the formation of his army by subtracting more than 10,000 from his none too numerous reserve at the very outset of the action; yet the manner in which the defensive measure was carried out rendered it wholly unequal to the emergency. Bülow had yet to traverse the difficult defile of St. Lambert and the quagmires in the valley of the Lasne—obstacles which of themselves nearly arrested his advance,—and the determined opposition of even a few battalions at this point or in the Wood of Paris must have brought him

¹⁴⁶ See text and note 91, page 155.

¹⁴⁷ For the 1 P.M. order to Grouchy see note 88, page 150.

1 P.M.

to a stand and compelled him to retrace his steps and enter the field, as Zieten did, farther to the right, which would have afforded to Napoleon precious hours in which to deal with Wellington. But no such effort was made; Domont's cavalry confined themselves to the plateau on which the French right wing rested, Napoleon limiting his personal attention to the central battle; Bülow, and afterwards Pirch, were allowed to cross the swamps, take unmolested possession of the wood, and assemble there a force which proved too overwhelming for Lobau's corps, and ultimately for the Young Guard also, to bear back. Leaving thus to others the defence of the vitally important approach to his right flank, Napoleon turned to the grand attack by which he trusted to crush the Allied line.¹⁴⁸

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¹⁴⁸ "Napoleon did not feel uneasy yet," says Thiers, describing the apparition of the distant troops, when it was yet uncertain who they were. Soon this was found out, and Thiers then observes, "This was a serious, but still not very alarming piece of information." Grouchy, he proceeds, might be coming, as well as Bülow, "so that this accident might still turn to our advantage." Grouchy, with Lobau and Domont, would be stronger than Bülow. "There was, therefore, no cause for alarm. . . . Napoleon was not in the least anxious. His 68,000 men were about to be opposed to 105,000, instead of 68,000; the chances of success were indeed less, but still very great." Thiers assumes two things—(1) that Napoleon expected Grouchy shortly to arrive; (2) that he instantly sent Lobau to hold the Prussians in check until that arrival. As to the former, Napoleon, who

had just sent an order to Grouchy, at Wavre, directing him to take that place, plainly expected nothing of the sort. As to the second, it is very uncertain at what time Lobau really did move to the right flank. In his statement about this, as about Grouchy, Thiers follows Napoleon's own assertion in his *Mémoires*, that Lobau moved at once. Siborne, contradicting this, says, "This is decidedly incorrect. The advance of Lobau's corps to the right was distinctly observed from the extreme left of the Duke of Wellington's army, and from the Prussian side of the field, at a much later period of the day." Lobau's whole career had been so fully instinct with clear-sightedness, enterprise, and vigour as to make it incredible that he would have suffered the Prussians to occupy the Wood of Paris had he been on the spot with two divisions. Both these statements of the

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II. *Attack upon the Allied Left and Centre.*

The grand movement, which was meant to be decisive, and which Ney had been busily preparing during the continuance of the struggle for Hougomont, was designed to overwhelm the Anglo-Allied left wing, break their centre at La Haye Sainte, seize that post, the eastern hamlets, the farm of Mont St. Jean, and with it the great road to Brussels, thus cutting off Wellington from that capital. There was now added the additional necessity of rolling up the Allied line

Mémoires are obviously afterthoughts. The probabilities are that Napoleon, in the first place, felt confident of being able to crush Wellington before the Prussians could come up in force, and that, next—as already in the attack on Hougomont and in sundry later passages of the day,—he allowed the battle to take care of itself, and left to his generals details which in former days he would have seen to himself. His own condition at this time, there is every reason to believe, is not inaccurately described in this passage from Charras: “Napoleon was ill. Suffering from two affections—one of which rendered all movement on horseback very painful—he remained on foot nearly all the day, seeing little for himself or seeing badly, and often judging of the progress of things from reports which more than once led him into error. He did not show the stoical energy of old Blücher, who, suffering also, spent twelve hours without dismounting from his horse. Had he been vigorous and active as formerly, he would have followed events closely, he would have prepared and executed better and more

promptly this or that manœuvre. That is certain. But what appears quite as certain is that, in the bad state of his health, he *would* not foresee the arrival of Bülow, of Zieten, of Pirch I on the battlefield, where he had already before him an army numerically equal to his own. He was too thoroughly convinced of the rout of the Prussian army to admit the possibility of such a concentration of forces. Now, this concentration was the principal cause of the catastrophe; for, spite of their gravity, nearly all the faults [of the day] would have been reparable if Blücher had not supported Wellington.” Charras’s generalization has been more than corroborated by the subsequently published *Mémoires* of Count Ségur, who says, “Turenne and Monthyon, general of division and sub-chief of the staff, have told me a hundred times that during this battle, which was deciding his fate, he remained a long time seated before a table placed upon this fatal field, and that they frequently saw his head, overcome by sleep, sink down upon the map spread out before his heavy eyes.”

from its left, so as to sunder it from the threatened junction with the Prussians. The force allotted to this task included the entire infantry of D'Erlon's corps, a portion of the cavalry in his rear and that on his right, a division of Kellermann's cavalry from the left wing, and Bachelu's infantry division from that wing—in all some 20,000 or 25,000 men. This immense mass of troops was to be supported in its attack by the fire of 10 batteries—3 of them of 12-pounders, the 4 foot-batteries belonging to D'Erlon's four divisions, and 3 horse-batteries from the cavalry divisions—altogether 74 guns. These were brought forward and established upon the central elevation in the valley, so that they were but 250 yards from La Haye Sainte and 600 from the "Wellington tree" at the junction of the Wavre and Charleroi roads, the centre of the Allied position. In an evil hour, however, Ney and D'Erlon had devised a new method of arranging infantry, designed to impart great solidity to columns of attack, but which, when actually applied to the troops whom it befell to make the serious charges, was found to make them utterly unwieldy—helpless to manœuvre and especially to resist cavalry.¹⁴⁰ This vicious formation went far to

¹⁴⁰ Thiers, describing this unfortunate discovery of the generals, says, "It was customary in the French army for the attacking column to advance with a battalion deployed in front to fire on the enemy, and the battalions on each flank formed into serried columns in order to resist the charges of the cavalry. On this occasion, however, both Ney and D'Erlon had drawn up the 8 battalions of each division in file, ranging them with a space of five paces between each line, so that there was barely room for the officers between the battalions, and rendering

it impossible for them to form into square to resist the cavalry. These four divisions, formed into four dense columns, advanced abreast at a distance of 300 feet from each other." This "300 feet" is no doubt another of the felicities of Thiers' English translator: the distance between the columns was, in fact, 300 paces. Brialmont—after remarking that "These columns were clearly too deep for the purpose of attack, and too close to be deployed"—says of them in a note, "It is not quite clear what the groundwork of their formation was. According to some,

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neutralize the great numerical superiority of D'Erlon's attacking columns over the infantry they were about to charge. This consisted—for it is not necessary to make any account of the Dutch-Belgians drawn up in advance of the Allied position—of Picton's division, troops of superb quality, but whom the wasting artillery fire and cavalry charges of Quatre Bras had left mere skeletons of regiments, numbering in all but 3671 men, drawn up in a two-deep line to encounter the shock of columns 13,000 strong.¹⁵⁰ The French troops, taken

it was the battalion, according to others the company. Military writers are not more agreed respecting the manner in which the attack was made, nor even as to the number of columns. Col. Charras professes to have been informed by an officer of rank in D'Erlon's corps that the battalions were deployed in columns at a distance of five paces one from the other; the space between one echelon and another was not more than 400 paces." Jomini, in his *Summary of the Campaign of 1815*, after citing the contradictory statements of different authorities as to the formation of these columns, says, "It is impossible to make out anything from such a chaos." His comment is, "The French must be censured for having attempted the first attack in masses too deep. This system was never successful against the murderous fire of English infantry and artillery. . . . Even supposing that this system be suitable on a dry and an open field, easy of access, and with equal artillery force, it is certain that infantry masses, hurled over muddy ground from which it is difficult to emerge, with an insufficient concurrence of other arms, attacking troops posted in excellent positions, have many chances

against them." The Erckmann-Chatrian conscript, who marched in one of the columns, says of their formation, "We had not time to form in column, but we were solidly arrayed after all, one behind the other, from 150 to 200 men in line in front, the captains between the companies, and the commandants between the battalions. But the balls, instead of carrying off two men at a time, would now take eight. Those in the rear could not fire because those in front were in the way, and we found, too, that we could not form in squares. That should have been thought of beforehand, but was overlooked in the desire to break the enemy's line and gain all at a blow." After describing what happened in consequence of this arrangement, the conscript concludes, "Those who have the direction of affairs in war should keep such examples as these before their eyes, and reflect that new plans cost those dear who are forced to try them."

¹⁵⁰ Napoleon is said to have complimented the 5th British division by asking during the morning's reconnaissance, '*Où est la division de Picton ?*' But the anecdote appears to bear the trade-mark of Lacoste.

in their order from left to right were to share in the attack in this manner—(a) Roussel's division of Kellermann's cuirassiers to support the infantry on its right and attack the troops about La Haye Sainte and the Allied centre beyond it; (b) Bachelu's division of Reille's corps to occupy the central elevation in the valley, protecting the batteries mounted thereon, holding the Charleroi road, supporting the attack upon La Haye Sainte, and connecting D'Erlon's corps with Reille's; (c) the left brigade of Donzelot's division to cross to the western side of the Charleroi road (into the front of Bachelu's division) and take La Haye Sainte; (d, e, f) the right brigade of Donzelot's division and the entire divisions of Alix¹⁵¹ and Marcognet to crush the infantry of the Allied left wing, take Mont St. Jean, and hold the Brussels road; (g) the left brigade of Durutte's division to support Marcognet and preserve the connection with (h) Durutte's right brigade, which was to take Papelotte, La Haye, and Smohain; and finally, of the cavalry of the right wing, Jaquinot's light horse on the right flank and Milhaud's cuirassiers in the second line were to support the infantry as occasion might require. The relative positions of the troops of both armies, as they actually encountered one another, may be best understood from a diagram.¹⁵²

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¹⁵¹ Alix's division was commanded on this day by Quiot.

¹⁵² The diagram, of course, is without value topographically, further than that the landmarks indicated in it connect the positions of the troops with the map on page 176. It does, however, show the relative order of the troops at the time of their coming in conflict—*e.g.* of Ponsonby's Union Brigade of cavalry, the Royals and Inniskillings from the 2d line charged through

the interval between Kempt's and Pack's brigades and fell upon the left and right brigades of Alix respectively, while the Scots Greys passed through Pack's brigade and charged the left brigade of Marcognet. Reference to this diagram will spare the need of whole pages of verbal description such as obscures Siborne's account of the fight. Lambert's brigade does not appear here, because it had not come into position at this period of the battle. Bylandt's

Charleroi-Brussels Road		Charleroi Road	
<div> <div>Somerset Household Brigade</div> <div> <div>1st line Cavalry</div> <div>1st line Infantry</div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>1st Life Gds.</div> <div>1st Drag. Gds. (King's)</div> <div>2d Life Gds.</div> <div>Royal H. Gds. (Blues)</div> </div>	<div> <div>La Haye Sainte</div> <div>ALDEN</div> <div>Kielmansegge Ompteda</div> </div>	<div> <div>Mont St. Jean</div> <div>Ponsoby Union Brigade</div> <div>Royals</div> <div>Inniskillings</div> <div>Scots Greys</div> </div>
		<div> <div>Kempt</div> <div>95, 32, 79, 28</div> </div>	<div> <div>PICTON</div> <div> <div> <div>Pack</div> <div>1, 42, 92, 44</div> </div> <div>Best</div> </div> </div>
		<div> <div>La Haye Sainte</div> <div>95, 32, 79, 28</div> </div>	<div> <div>Papelotte</div> <div>La Haye</div> <div>Smohain</div> </div>
Roussel	BACHELU	<div> <div>left br. = right br.</div> <div>DONZELOT</div> <div>28, 105 = 55, 54</div> <div>ALIX</div> <div>25, 45 = 26, 46</div> <div>MARCOGNET</div> <div>left br. = right br.</div> <div>DURUTTE</div> </div>	<div> <div>left br. = right br.</div> <div>D'ERLON</div> <div>28, 105 = 55, 54</div> <div>ALIX</div> <div>25, 45 = 26, 46</div> <div>MARCOGNET</div> <div>left br. = right br.</div> <div>DURUTTE</div> </div>
a	b	c	d
		e	f
		g	h

The attack had been long delayed by the apparition of the Prussians in the east and the direction of the measures to oppose them; ¹⁵³ but, these completed, Napoleon ordered the advance. The great battery on the central height directed a most destructive fire upon the whole Allied centre, but especially against Picton's division, which crowned the northern heights, and that brigade of Dutch-Belgians posted in advance of the general line and in front of Pack's brigade. ¹⁵⁴ Under cover of this cannonade, the infantry of D'Erlon's entire corps moved forward in columns, and from the head of each column the light troops detached themselves and spread out into a loose line of skirmishers that filled the valley from La Haye Sainte to the eastern hamlets, pressing on with loud shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" while the cannon-shot tore over their heads into the ranks which faced them. The brigades on either flank first came in contact with their enemy. On the right Durutte's extreme brigade (*h*) fell upon Papelotte, and its skirmishers engaged with those of the brigade of Nassau troops led by Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar. The French in their first rush carried the farmhouse of Papelotte, which had been occupied by but a single

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Dutch-Belgians are not shown, because they took no part in the fight. The numbers given under the names of brigade- and division-commanders are those of their several regiments in their proper order.

¹⁵³ "It was noticed on the English side," says Gleig, "that, though the enemy seemed to have completed their formation, a pause of some continuance ensued. The fire of cannon did not even slacken, neither were horse or foot put in motion, but mounted officers rode briskly toward the elevated land above La

Belle Alliance, and there stood in a group." This was at the time of the discovery of the Prussians. Before this, much time had been lost in perfecting the novel arrangement of the infantry, so that this attack, which was meant to open the battle, was not really delivered until two hours after it had begun on the side of Hougomont. Napoleon has been much blamed because his attacks on this day were partial and isolated: in this instance, at least, the defect was no part of his design.

¹⁵⁴ See page 201.

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light company ; but five other companies of Nassauers came up and recovered it after a hot struggle. The fight now spread to La Haye and Smohain, and continued indecisively for some hours, both sides gaining occasional partial advantages, but neither dislodging the other.= On the extreme left of the main attack, meanwhile, Ney in person led Donzelot's left brigade (c) across the Charleroi road and forward against La Haye Sainte. These buildings had been most negligently cared for by the British officers who should have strengthened them ; ¹⁵⁵ but their defence had been confided to a gallant officer of the King's German Legion, Major Baring, who occupied the buildings with 2 of the six companies of his own light battalion, the garden in their rear with 1 company, and the orchard in front with 3 companies : upon the west of the orchard, in extension of its front, he had drawn up 2 light companies, also of Ompteda's brigade, and 1 of Hanoverian riflemen. These three companies in the field and those behind the orchard hedge opened a sharp fire upon Ney's skirmishers as they drew near, but the French replied effectively—one bullet at the first discharge carrying away the bridle of Major Baring's horse, while another killed Major Bösewiel, his second in command. The numbers of the assailants were overwhelming, and bore back the men of the German Legion, in spite of their stout resistance, toward the barn ; they broke through the quickset hedge, filled the orchard, and ejected its occupants ; and they next attacked the buildings themselves. "A brave officer, Vieux," says Thiers, "commandant of engineers, . . . advancing axe in hand to beat down the door of the farmhouse, was struck by a ball, but did not yield until the number of his wounds rendered it impossible

¹⁵⁵ See page 202.

for him to stand. The door still resisted, and the balls rained from the walls." The buildings were safe, at least for the present; but the orchard was taken, the enclosures surrounded, the garden so beset that Baring ordered the company holding it to retire into the buildings, and the troops in the field were thoroughly overmatched. But Wellington, watching what passed,¹⁵⁶ had sent down from the heights Col. von Klencke with the Luneburg field-battalion, from Kielmansegge's brigade; and Baring, thus reinforced, was moving forward to recover the orchard, and had already made the enemy give ground, when he perceived on his right front a line of cuirassiers—a regiment from (a) Roussel's division which had been ordered to charge in consequence of Wellington's withdrawing part of his infantry to the reverse slope in order to shelter them from the fire of the great battery, a movement which had seemed to Kellermann the beginning of a retreat that ought to be followed up by cavalry. As the horsemen came upon Baring's outlying skirmishers, these ran in toward the orchard to gather in mass, but in doing so they collided with Klencke's battalion and threw it into disorder, which became hopeless as the cavalry came on in front just as the French infantry in the rear set up exultant shouts over their capture of the garden.

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¹⁵⁶ "Wellington," says Hooper, at the close of his account of the first stage of the attack upon Hougomont, "Wellington had remained above Hougomont during this fierce and prolonged combat, a mark for the enemy's shot. He had watched, directed, sustained the fight; but he had not neglected to observe the movements of his foe on the further side of La Belle Alliance. He had seen Ney's great battery arrayed,

gun after gun, on the commanding ridge in front of the British left, and he had noted the formation of columns of attack in rear of the battery. Hougomont was safe, and the Duke now rode over to his left, and halted where the Wavre road intersects the road from Charleroi to Brussels, just above La Haye Sainte, a post of observation whence he could distinguish every movement of the French on that side."

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Baring tried in vain to rally them—they scattered and fled, some toward the Allied position, whence they had come, some into the rear of the garden, some across the Charleroi road, while a portion made their way into the buildings of La Haye Sainte and joined its defenders—thus escaping the fate of the fugitives, who for the most part were ridden down and sabred by the cuirassiers or shot as they passed by the troops in the garden, so that the battalion was virtually destroyed, Klencke himself being killed and the Major, Von Dachenhausen, taken prisoner. The cuirassiers, elated at this success, pressed on into the rear of La Haye Sainte and were preparing to charge the main position—where Kielmansegge's and Ompteda's brigades formed squares to receive them—when they were met by British cavalry, and an encounter ensued that belongs to a later stage of the battle.= These conflicts at the two extremes of the grand advance—at Papelotte and at La Haye Sainte,—though earlier than those along the centre, were but momentarily so: the rattle and smoke of the musketry that began at either end of the long skirmishing line quickly rolled inward until it became continuous throughout its whole length, and the attacking columns followed close upon the skirmishers.¹⁵⁷ As they neared the Allied position the French supporting batteries, which had been playing over their heads, suspended their fire, and instead of the thunder of the guns were heard the shouts of the ardent French soldiery and their drums beating the

¹⁵⁷ The troops that had to cross the valley found trouble from the mud. Thiers says, "The ground being soft and wet, the infantry took some time to cross the space that lay between them and the enemy." Kennedy says, "The whole of

D'Erlon's four divisions advanced to the attack in imposing masses, about half-past 1 o'clock, thickly covering their whole front with skirmishers: the actual collision commenced a little before 2 o'clock."

pas de charge. These demonstrations proved too much for Bylandt's Dutch-Belgians, who had already become restive under their exposure to the artillery fire, but had hitherto remained in line. Now, however, they did not await the coming of the French skirmishers, but "commenced a hurried retreat, not partially and promiscuously, but collectively and simultaneously—so much so that the movement carried with it the appearance of its having resulted from a word of command. The disorder of these troops rapidly augmented; but, on their reaching the straggling hedge along the crest of the position, an endeavour was made to rally them upon the 5th battalion of Dutch militia. This attempt, however, notwithstanding the most strenuous exertions on the part of the officers, completely failed. The reserve battalion and the artillerymen of Capt. Byleveld's battery, though they seemed to stem the torrent for a moment, were quickly swept away by its accumulating force. As they rushed past the British columns, hissings, hootings, and execrations were indignantly heaped upon them; and one portion, in its eagerness to get away, nearly ran over the grenadier company of the 28th British regiment, the men of which were so enraged that it was with difficulty they could be prevented from firing upon the fugitives. Some of the men of the 1st, or Royal Scots, were also desirous of shooting them. Nothing seemed to restrain their flight, which ceased only when they found themselves completely across and covered by the main ridge along which the Anglo-Allied army was drawn up. Here they continued, comparatively under shelter, during the remainder of the battle, in which they took no further part, and to assist in gaining which their services were from that moment neither afforded nor required."¹⁵⁸ This

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¹⁵⁸ This account of the stampede of the Dutch-Belgians is by Siborne,

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flight of the Dutch-Belgians left Picton's division alone to withstand the oncoming shock of D'Erlon's three heavy columns; and for a moment Kempt's brigade singly was so exposed, for the other brigade, Pack's, besides being separated by a wide interval from Kempt's left, was also about 150 yards in its rear, so that Kempt's left flank was liable to be turned. Kempt's right was formed by the 95th regiment, of which 2

who recounts it much more mildly than some of his countrymen have done. This is in accordance with the generally courtier-like tone which pervades Siborne's quasi-official book, and closely adheres to the example set by Wellington, who from the first set his face against any account of the battle except the official reports. In dissuading one writer who applied to him for information the Duke wrote (August 8, 1815), "The faults or the misbehaviour of some gave occasion for the distinction of others, and perhaps were the cause of material losses, and you cannot write the true history of a battle without including the faults and misbehaviour of a part at least of those engaged." To the answer to this he rejoined (August 17), "I regret much that I have not been able to prevail upon you to relinquish your plan; you may depend upon it you will never make it a satisfactory work. . . . Remember, I recommend you to leave the battle of Waterloo as it is." To Sir John Sinclair, who wrote a worthless account of the fight at Hougomont which Scott added bodily as an appendix to *Paul's Letters*, Wellington wrote later (April 28, 1816), "I am really disgusted with and ashamed of all I have seen of the battle of Waterloo. The

number of writings upon it would lead the world to suppose that the British army had never fought a battle before; and there is not one which contains a true representation or even an idea of the transaction." As to the part of the Dutch-Belgian troops in the battle, Wellington was obliged in his official report to make a mention to which he refers in this postscript to the letter with which he transmitted it to the King of the Netherlands, "P.S.—J'ai marqué au crayon des paragraphes dans mon rapport que je prie votre Majesté de ne pas laisser publier." = How the Belgians themselves regarded the whole business is told by Scott in one of *Paul's Letters*: "The *Braves Belges* are naturally proud of the military glory they have acquired, as well as of the Prince who led them on. In every corner of Brussels there were ballad-singers bellowing out songs in praise of the Prince [of Orange] and his followers. I, who am a collector of popular effusions, did not fail to purchase specimens of the Flemish minstrelsy, in which, by the way, there is no more mention of the Duke of Wellington or of John Bull than if John Bull and his illustrious general had had nothing to do with the battle of Waterloo."

companies occupied the sand-pit adjoining the Charleroi road, one lined the hedge on the rear and left of the sand-pit, and the remainder of the 95th and the three other regiments of the brigade were drawn up parallel with the hedge, some 50 yards behind it. Upon these troops that right brigade of Donzelot's (*d*) which had followed the eastern side of the highroad was now moving. It soon came under a severe fire from the British batteries and from the rifles of the 95th, who had hitherto been concealed by the hedge and tall grain in their front, and it also found the highroad obstructed by an abatis—from all which it resulted that the column swerved greatly toward its right, so that its advance was no longer perpendicular to the position of the 95th, but diagonally across the front of the brigade and in the direction of the 79th and 28th regiments. The French skirmishers, however, swarmed into the space left between the column and the highroad, out-flanked the companies about the sand-pit, and compelled them to fall back upon the body of their own regiment, as did the skirmishers of all the British regiments before the advancing column. Picton was leading his line forward and was close to the hedge, when Donzelot's column, about 40 yards distant, halted and began to deploy to the right, the rear battalions trying to clear their front, but impeded in doing so by their novel formation. Picton seized the moment of their confusion, and called to his men, in his tremendous voice, "A volley, and then charge!" The volley threw the column into disorder, and the British regiments burst through the hedge to deliver the charge. The scramble through the hedge involved delay and impaired the formation of the line; and those of the French who were in a condition to act threw in a fire that told severely, killing Picton and bringing down

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many of his followers, especially of the 79th regiment ; but the hedge was soon cleared, and order restored, and the brigade dashed forward, charging with the bayonet.¹⁵⁹ Donzelot's column, already surprised in its manœuvre, and shaken by the fire, became panic-

¹⁵⁹ Picton was in his saddle before Kempt's brigade, watching the onset of D'Erlon's columns, which he expected first to fall upon the Dutch-Belgians in his front. His aide-de-camp, Capt. Tyler, pointing out their unsteady condition, and saying they would certainly run, Picton rejoined, "Never mind ; they shall have a taste of it at all events," and almost instantly they were seen in flight. Expressing his opinion of their conduct in the extremely forcible terms of speech which he had at command, Picton led forward his own nearest brigade to meet the shock, and at the very outset of the struggle was struck by a bullet on the right temple and instantly killed. Capt. Seymour, Lord Uxbridge's aide-de-camp, was beside him, rallying the Highlanders, saw that he was struck, and was about to assist him, when his own horse fell dead under him, and he called to Capt. Tyler, who, aided by a private soldier, removed their already lifeless general from his horse and bore away his body to the rear. The Earl of Albemarle says of Picton—whom he describes as "a strong-built man, with a red face, small black eyes, and large nose,"—"There had been some misunderstanding between him and the Duke of Wellington, and it was only a very few days before the opening of the campaign . . . that they were sufficiently reconciled to enable him to take the command of a corps. He set out from London

on the 11th June, having first made his will, as if he had a presentiment of the fate that awaited him. My friend, the late Mr. James Trotter, the Commissary-General of his division, was with him for an hour on the morning of the 18th of June. He told me that the demeanour of the General was that of a man who did not expect to outlive the day. He fell by a musket-ball early in the day, while 'gloriously leading the division to a charge with bayonets by which one of the most serious attacks made by the enemy on our position was defeated.'" The quoted clause is from the Duke of Wellington's official despatch. Lord Albemarle states that "the ball, flattened by striking against Picton's right temple," is in the possession of his family. He also describes the general's threefold funeral—at Waterloo, then at St. George's, London ; lastly, at St. Paul's Cathedral in 1859. = At nearly the moment of Picton's death Ensign Birtwhistle, of the 32nd Regiment, fell severely wounded, and resigned the regimental colour to Lieut. Belcher, when it was seized by a French officer whose horse had just fallen under him, and a struggle ensued. While Belcher was drawing his sword his sergeant thrust the Frenchman in the breast with his halbert, and a private shot him just as Major Toole was interposing too late with the cry, "Save the brave fellow." The colour was retained by Belcher.

stricken, and mingled into a struggling mass. The British, pressing upon them as they tried to retreat, were bearing them resistlessly down the slope, when their advance was arrested by a mass of flying and pursuing horsemen who, coming from the rear of La Haye Sainte, burst into this part of the field and among the scattered French infantry, many of whom were ridden down as the cavalry swept away into the valley. The contest between Kempt's brigade and Donzelot's column was thus ended; those of the French who could escape did so; many surrendered themselves, many were slain, some taken prisoners; but the charge was over, and Kempt, finding that fighting was going on beyond his left, hastened to recall his men from pursuit and re-form his regiments.¹⁶⁰ = Alix's (or Quiot's) two brigades (*e*) had come on in echelon to Donzelot's column, at a distance of 300 paces to its right. As the Dutch-Belgians disappeared from their front, they found themselves before an unoccupied space—the interval between Kempt's and Pack's brigades,—with nothing apparently to bar their advance to Mont St. Jean; and the leading ranks burst through the hedge and established themselves with exultant shouts upon the crest of the Allied heights. The extreme left of the column, however, came up close upon the flank of the 28th regiment of Kempt's brigade at the moment when it was advancing in line through the hedge in its charge upon Donzelot. The right companies of the (English) 28th had already become involved in that charge and continued to press it; but the left wing of the regiment turned upon the new comer, and, separating from

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¹⁶⁰ During the struggle with Donzelot's column a battalion of the German Legion from Ompteda's brigade crossed the Charleroi road and

supported the right of Kempt's brigade. It returned to its own position when the emergency was passed.

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its own right, rapidly brought forward its right shoulder, thus forming at a right angle to the remainder of Kempt's line and showing a front against Alix's left flank. The 28th poured its fire into the passing column, thus increasing the disorder it had already experienced from its passage through the hedge; and at the same moment the head of the French column ceased its triumphant cries and stayed its progress, for it unexpectedly found itself on the point of being charged by a regiment of British cavalry. = Marcognet's division (*f*) moved on the right of Alix and against that portion of the Allied position which, left bare by the stampede of the Dutch-Belgians, Pack's Scottish regiments were pressing forward to occupy.¹⁶¹ In crossing the valley Marcognet's column had suffered severely from the fire of Rettberg's Hanoverian battery, posted on the commanding knoll at the right of Best's brigade; yet its left brigade passed the hedge at the same time with Alix's troops and ascended the slope in perfect order and with manifest determination. The French brigade faced the 42d and 92d Highlanders, as both sides continued to advance: the French were the first to fire, which they did effectively, but the Highlanders refrained from answering until they came within 20 or 30 yards of their enemy, when they delivered a volley that for a moment staggered him. But the French quickly recovered themselves and replied with great effect, and the Highlanders were in the act of moving to the charge when, here also, the cavalry came up, and the action took a new shape. Mar-

¹⁶¹ Pack's brigade moved forward from its position, somewhat in the rear of Best's Hanoverians, as soon as the continuity of the front line was broken. In the advance the 44th regiment, which was on the

left of the brigade, came up in the rear of Best's line, and was left in support of the three Highland regiments, which kept on advancing toward the front.

cognet's right brigade, being somewhat in the rear of that which met Pack's regiments, encountered no infantry, but was involved in the general onset by the British horse.

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The Duke of Wellington, as soon as the proportions and aim of D'Erlon's attack disclosed themselves, had decided to make up for his deficiency in infantry supports for his left wing by employing his cavalry. Lord Uxbridge, accordingly, prepared for a charge by both of his heavy brigades, then drawn up on either side of the Charleroi road just in advance of Mont St. Jean—Lord Edward Somerset's Household Brigade to attack Roussel's cuirassiers, Sir William Ponsonby's Union Brigade to attack D'Erlon's infantry columns. Lord Uxbridge himself was to lead the charge of the Household Brigade, riding with the 2d Life Guards, that he might be at the centre of his line when the two brigades should unite in the valley.¹⁶² Just as the horsemen made ready to advance the need of support was most urgent along the whole line of the conflict—Papelotte at the one extremity and La Haye Sainte at the other were hard beset; Roussel's horsemen had swept Baring's infantry from the

¹⁶² There is a standing dispute as to whether a cavalry general ought to charge in person, thereby limiting his command to that of the troops immediately about him, or remain with the second line and direct the movements of the several bodies under his charge. In this instance Lord Uxbridge, intent upon establishing the ascendancy of British cavalry, had determined in advance upon assuming the personal leadership; but he had taken the precaution of advising the commanders of his brigades that he expected them to support whatever

offensive movements might take place in their front. He not only had British light cavalry brigades on either flank of his present charge—Vandeleur's and Vivian's on his left and Grant's on his right—but he had designated one regiment of each of the charging brigades to act in support of the remainder—the Blues to the Household Brigade, the Scots Greys to the Union Brigade. Nevertheless the Greys got unavoidably drawn into the first line, and before the affair was ended the want of supports was most serious.

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open field, had cut down a Hanoverian battalion, and were on the point of attacking the Allied centre; on the left Picton's two wasted brigades seemed about to be overborne by five of the intact brigades of D'Erlon. At this moment came the order to charge. The cuirassiers (*a*), triumphant from their overthrow of the Hanoverians, had ridden through the line of fire of two batteries and up to the brow of the Allied ridge; they had regained their order; their trumpets had sounded the charge; they were dashing forward with shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" upon Ompteda's and Kielmansegge's squares, which had already opened fire upon them, when the Household Brigade, also at charging speed, dashed into them. The shock was tremendous, but it answered the purpose of the English horsemen, whose aim was to wedge themselves in closely among their antagonists and come to close quarters, thus at once lessening the advantage the French derived from their much longer sabres and gaining for themselves the benefit of their superior weight both of men and of horses. "Swords gleamed high in air with the suddenness and rapidity of the lightning-flash, now clashing violently together, and now clanging heavily upon resisting armour; whilst with the din of the battle-shock were mingled the shouts and yells of the combatants. Riders vainly struggling for mastery quickly fell under the deadly thrust or the well-delivered cut. Horses, plunging and rearing, staggered to the earth, or broke wildly from the ranks. But, desperate and bloody as was the struggle, it was of brief duration. The physical superiority of the British, aided by transcendent valour, was speedily made manifest; and the cuirassiers, notwithstanding their gallant and most resolute resistance, were driven down from off the ridge which they had

ascended only a few minutes before with all the pride and confidence of men accustomed and determined to overcome every obstacle.”¹⁶³ The clash of these two bodies of cavalry and the subsequent hand-to-hand conflict did not occur throughout the whole extent of their array: the approaching lines were not parallel with one another, and it was the British right-hand

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¹⁶³ The description of this cavalry action is quoted from Siborne, as are the two which follow. Kennedy, who beheld the encounter, says, “I believe this to have been the only fairly tested fight of cavalry against cavalry during the day. It was a fair meeting of two bodies of heavy cavalry, each in perfect order. The subsequent attacks were either those of heavy cavalry against heavy cavalry that had been previously wrecked upon squares of infantry, or contests between light and heavy cavalry.” Scott wrote to the Duke of Buccleuch, after his visit to Waterloo, this account of the cavalry conflict:—“The cuirassiers, despite their arms of proof, were quite inferior to our heavy dragoons. The meeting of the two bodies occasioned a noise not inaptly compared to the tinkering and hammering of a smith’s shop. Generally the cuirassiers came on stooping their heads very low, and giving point; the British frequently struck away their casques while they were in this position, and then laid at the bare head. Officers and soldiers all fought hand to hand, without distinction; and many of the former owed their life to dexterity at their weapon and personal strength of body.” Sir Augustus Frazer wrote, “The Life Guards . . . overset the cuirassiers, searching with the coolness of expe-

rienced soldiers the unprotected parts of their opponents, and stabbing where the openings of the cuirass would admit the points of their swords.” One Hodgson—a private in the Life Guards, who was wounded, but afterwards stood as a model to Haydon, the painter—thus recounted to the latter his experience:—“The first man who stopped him, he told us, was an Irishman in the French service. He dashed at Hodgson, saying, ‘— you, I’ll stop your crowing.’ Hodgson said he felt frightened, as he had never fought anybody with swords. The first cut he gave was on the cuirass, which Hodgson thought was silver-lace—the shock nearly broke his arm. Watching the cuirassier, however, he found he could move his own horse quicker; so, dropping the reins, and guiding his horse with his knees, as the cuirassier at last gave point, Hodgson cut his sword-hand off, and then dashed the point of his sword into the man’s throat, turned it round and round. ‘— me, sir,’ he added, ‘now I had found out the way, I soon gave it them.’” = To understand the incident which follows, the formation of the heights in rear of La Haye Sainte and the “hollow-ways” formed by the intersecting Wavre and Charleroi roads must be borne in mind (see p. 179, and note 109).

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regiment, the 1st Life Guards, which first came in contact with the cuirassiers, and from them the collision ran instantaneously down the line—resembling, some eye-witnesses declared, a wave on the sea-coast, when the break begins at one end and runs along the crest toward the other; while some likened it to “the meeting of two flocks of sheep in a confined space, neither of which will give ground.” But before that end of either line nearest the Charleroi road was an obstacle that prevented their mingling—that “hollow-way” formed where the Wavre road is cut through the heights and intersects the Charleroi road. Coming upon this unexpectedly, the cuirassiers were checked in their career, but could not stop; they scrambled as best they could down the almost precipitous bank, and reached the roadway with so little semblance of order that it was hopeless to attempt a stand against the left of Somerset’s line—the 2d Life Guards—which was coming at full speed upon them. They filed off abruptly to their right, and, pursued by the Life Guards, as much disordered as themselves, dashed across the Charleroi road and into the space in which Picton’s men were at that instant driving the head of Donzelot’s column (*d*) down the slope.¹⁶⁴ Here many of the cuirassiers stayed their flight, turned upon the Life Guards, and brought on innumerable single combats; but most of the French horsemen plunged in among their own scattered infantry, who “threw themselves down to allow both fugitives and pursuers to ride over them, and then in many instances rose up and fired after the latter.”¹⁶⁵ Soon even those who had stood at

¹⁶⁴ See text, page 249.

¹⁶⁵ This version of the occurrence is Siborne’s. Alison—who was very diligent in collecting the various incidents of the battle, and then fitting

them together anyhow, wherever they grouped most picturesquely, and without regard to their actual time or place—first says, with his usual grammatical felicity, that the French

bay were forced by the greater individual strength of the English to resume their flight; the dragoons followed them, and, pressing down into the valley, joined there the remainder of their own brigade, who had pursued the great mass of the cuirassiers down the western side of La Haye Sainte, as well as the regiments of the Union Brigade on their left, which down to this time had been engaged with D'Erlon's infantry.¹⁶⁶ =

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infantry "was rode over," and then adds in continuation that "the soldiers in despair fell on their faces on the ground and called for quarter." It may be remarked once for all that such representations—of which there were many in the earlier English narratives—are not in accordance with fact. In this instance, the foolish manner in which D'Erlon's columns had been formed made it impossible for the men to deploy expeditiously and rendered them helpless against inferior numbers. But in every phase of the battle, as long as it was contested, the French, like the British, fought gallantly.

¹⁶⁶ Corporal Shaw, of the 2d Life Guards, a noted pugilist, performed extraordinary exploits during this charge. Disdaining the use of the sabre, he laid his opponents low with his fists, disposing in this way of several in succession—"not fewer than 7 enemies," says Gleig; "not less than 9 of his opponents," says Siborne; "he is supposed to have slain or disabled 10 Frenchmen with his own hand," says Scott. It is certain, at any rate, that the man showed wonderful boldness and dexterity and spread terror around him. Siborne says that a cuirassier rode to one side, took deliberate aim with his carbine, and ended "that life which his powerful arm and gallant

daring had made proof against the swords of all who ventured to approach him." Gleig declares this to be a mistake, adding, "Shaw continued with his regiment till the ardour of men and horses carried them whence few were able to return, and reached the position again so enfeebled from the loss of blood, that he could with difficulty creep to a dunghill beside one of the straggling houses in the rear, where he lay down. Nobody noticed him during the remainder of the struggle; but next morning he was found dead, without one wound about him sufficiently serious in itself to occasion death." Scott says that "In the morning he was found dead, with his face leaning on his hand, as if life had been extinguished while he was in a state of insensibility." Scott, it may be mentioned, had Shaw's skull among the adornments of his Abbotsford museum. Haydon, the painter, had formerly employed Shaw as a model, and looked up some of his comrades, to learn his fate:—"Another," he says, "saw Shaw fighting with two cuirassiers at a time; Shaw, he said, always 'cleared his passage.' He saw him take an eagle, but lose it afterwards, as when any man got an eagle all the others near him, on both sides, left off fighting, and set on him who had

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Ponsonby, on receiving the order to charge, put the three regiments of the Union Brigade in position to move—the Scots Greys in support, on the left rear of the other two regiments,—and he himself rode forward to the hedge before the Wavre road, that he might see the position of the enemy and time his attack opportunely. It was delivered in each case precisely where it was needed.¹⁶⁷ The right-hand regiment, the Royals,

the eagle. Afterwards, when lying wounded in the yard at La Haye Sainte, he heard some one groaning, and, turning round, saw Shaw, who said, ‘I am dying; my side is torn off by a shell.’ Corporal Webster, of the 2d Life Guards, saw Shaw give his first cut; a cuirassier gave point at him, Shaw parried the thrust, and before the cuirassier recovered Shaw cut him right through his brass helmet to the chin, ‘and his face fell off him like a bit of apple.’”

=It was during the hurried dash of the cuirassiers into the rear of La Haye Sainte and across the Charleroi road, that some of them floundered into the sand-pit and were either killed by the fall or shot by the rifles of the 95th. Hooper’s account is as follows:—“The French broke away to their right, thinking to escape down the Charleroi road, but, stopped by the abatis, they crossed the road. . . . As they crossed the Charleroi road a round shot from La Belle Alliance bounded up the pavé, and struck the mass; in a moment horses and men were writhing in the wildest confusion. Some stumbled also into the gravel-pit, where a cuirassier and a Life Guardsman, on foot, wrestled together with deadly tenacity.” The Guardsman, Hooper adds in a note, was named George Gerrard, and he killed his antago-

nist. It was doubtless this incident which Alison, following *Paul’s Letters*, had in mind when relating how Wellington checked an advance of cuirassiers by a charge of Somerset’s brigade. “These splendid troops,” he says, “overflowing with strength, bore down with such vigour on the French cuirassiers that they were fairly rode [*sic*] over by the weight of man and horse, and a considerable number, driven headlong over a precipice into a gravel-pit, were killed by the fall, while the remainder, trod [*sic*] under foot and crushed by the wheels of some artillery and wagons which at the moment were coming up, perished miserably.” This episode Alison refers to the period during which the French held La Haye Sainte and thence attacked the Allied centre—that is, the fourth phase of the battle. Victor Hugo, again, expands upon Alison’s story so far as to have the greater part of the French cavalry engulfed in a hidden chasm, which he makes an adequate cause for the loss of the battle. This he associates with the general cavalry charges against the Allied line—the third phase of the battle. The germ of his truly astonishing romance lies in this flight beside the sand-pit.

¹⁶⁷ The cavalry attacks were made almost simultaneously along

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dashed unexpectedly upon the head of Alix's (*e*) leading column,¹⁶⁸ which had already cleared the hedge, and was pressing exultantly up the slope, with no enemy that it could see in its front, though its left flank had been fired upon by Kempt's 28th regiment. "Suddenly," says Siborne, "its loud shouts of triumph ceased as it perceived the close approach of cavalry up the interior slope of the Allied position. Whether it was actuated by a consciousness of danger from the disorder necessarily occasioned in its rear by the passage through the banked-up hedges, by the dread of being caught in the midst of any attempt to assume a formation better adapted for effective resistance, or of being entirely cut off from all support, it is difficult to decide; but the head of this column certainly appeared to be seized by a panic. Having thrown out an irregular and scattering fire, which served only to bring down about 20 of the dragoons, it instantly faced about and endeavoured to regain the opposite side of the hedges. The Royals, however, were slashing in amongst them before this object could be effected. The rear ranks of the column, still pressing forward and unconscious of the obstruction in front, now met those that were hurled back upon them, down the exterior slope, by the charge of the Royals, who continued pressing forward against both front and flanks

the whole line. Merely to preserve the sequence of the narrative, they are described here in the order followed with the French attacks already described—that is, from the French left to right.

¹⁶⁸ Alix's division had marched in echelon of brigades, each brigade consisting of 2 regiments, and each regiment of 2 battalions marching in

column. Marcognet's division, 300 paces on its right, was similarly arranged, as shown in the annexed diagram,—the numbers being those of the regiments.

ALIX		MARCOGNET	
28	105	25	45
55		26	46

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of the mass. The whole was in a moment so jammed together as to have become perfectly helpless. Men tried in vain to use their muskets, which were either jerked out of their hands, or discharged at random in the attempt. Gradually, a scattering flight from the rear loosened the unmanageable mass, which now rolled back helplessly along its downward course. Many brave spirits, hitherto pent up in the midst of the throng, appeared disposed to hazard a defiance; and amongst these the swords of the Royals dealt fearful havoc: many others threw down their arms and gave themselves up in despair, and these were hurried off by the conquerors to the rear of the British line.”¹⁶⁹ On the left of the 105th regiment, which had thus given way, was the 28th, as yet unattacked, though much disordered by the pressure of the fugitives who threw themselves upon it; but on witnessing the discomfiture of the other brigade by the Inniskillings, it made but faint resistance when the Royals attacked it, and retreated in disorder into the valley, pursued by the dragoons. = The Inniskillings, coming up on the left of the Royals, were a moment later in striking the enemy; for their left and part of their centre squadron had to pass through or around the right of Pack’s brigade in their advance, and their charge was directed against the right-hand brigade of Alix’s division, which was in

¹⁶⁹ The eagle of the 105th regiment, which had been presented by the Empress Maria Louisa, was taken during this turmoil. The guard surrounding it were seeking shelter in the yet unbroken column of the 28th, when Capt. Clark of the Royals saw it, gave the order “Right shoulders forward — attack the colour,” and led toward it himself. He ran his sword through the stand-

ard-bearer, but could only touch without holding the colour as it fell, and it was caught by the corporal who followed his captain. Clark was about breaking the eagle from the pole when the corporal remonstrated, saying, “Pray, sir, do not break it!” The captain sent him with it to the rear, and it subsequently decorated Chelsea Hospital.

support of the brigade on which the Royals had fallen, and not so far up the slope.¹⁷⁰ “The Irish ‘Hurrah!’ loud, long, and shrill, rent the air, as the Inniskillings, bursting through the hedge and bounding over the road, dashed boldly down the slope towards the French columns, which were about 100 yards distant—an interval that imparted an additional impetus to their charge, and assisted in securing for it a result equally brilliant with that obtained by the other two regiments. The right and centre squadrons bore down upon the 55th French regiment, while the left squadron alone charged the 54th regiment. These columns, like those on the right and left, were not allowed time to recover from their astonishment at the unexpected, sudden, and vehement charge of cavalry launched against them. A feeble and irregular fire was the only attempt made to avert the impending danger. In the next instant the dragoons were amongst them, plying their swords with fearful swiftness and dexterity, and cleaving their way

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¹⁷⁰ As the Inniskillings rode forward there was an episode which the British popular historian of the period fondly dwelt upon, and which, in the opinion of the Rev. Mr. Gleig, “though it has frequently been described before, cannot well be omitted from any narrative which undertakes to tell the story of the Battle of Waterloo.” There rode up to the dragoons as they passed “a gentleman in coloured clothes,” who gave utterance to these remarkable words—“At ‘em, my lads, at ‘em; now’s your time!” The speaker, Mr. Gleig tells us, was “the late chivalrous and gallant Duke of Richmond.” It does not appear that, aside from this burst of eloquence, the Duke did anything but ride for awhile about

the field and then back to Brussels; but he had, as the Rev. Mr. Gleig states it, “not fewer than three sons in the fight—the present Duke, then Earl of March, Lord George and Lord William Lennox;” and the popular historian records, as if it were a Providential recognition of the Ducal condescension, that but one of these youths was wounded, “for,” he observes, “none of the blood of Lennox ever shrunk from danger, and all were that day more than usually exposed to it.”=The Lord William Lennox above mentioned many years after published two volumes of *Recollections*—as silly and purposeless a book as is often seen; but it added nothing to our information on the subject of this battle.

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into the midst of the masses which, rolling back and scattering outwards, presented an extraordinary scene of confusion. In addition to the destruction effected by this regiment, the number of prisoners which it secured was immense."=Farthest on the left of the Union Brigade were the Scots Greys. They had been appointed to act in reserve; but as they followed the other regiments they saw Pack's Highlanders hastening to the front and about to charge the immensely outnumbering column of Marcognet (*f*), which had already surmounted the heights in excellent order and was advancing resolutely. The duty of the Greys was clear; they joined in the general charge, passing through the ranks of the Highland infantry as best they could, and receiving an enthusiastic greeting from their countrymen. "They mutually cheered. 'Scotland for ever!' was the war-shout. The smoke in which the head of the French column was enshrouded had not cleared away when the Greys dashed into the mass. So eager was the desire, so strong the determination, of the Highlanders to aid their compatriots in completing the work so gloriously begun, that many were seen holding on by the stirrups of the horsemen, while all rushed forward, leaving none but the disabled in their rear. The leading portion of the column soon yielded to this infuriated onset: the remainder, which was yet in the act of ascending the exterior slope, appalled by the sudden appearance of cavalry at a moment when, judging by the sound of musketry-fire in front, they had naturally concluded that it was with infantry alone they had to contend, were hurled back in confusion by the impetus of the shock. The dragoons, having the advantage of the descent, appeared to mow down the mass, which, bending under the pressure, quickly spread itself outwards in all directions. Yet in that

mass were many gallant spirits, who could not be brought to yield without a struggle; and these fought bravely to the death—not that they served to impede, but only to mark more strongly the course of the impetuous torrent as it swept wildly past them, presenting to the eye of the artistic observer those streaks which, arising incidentally from such partial and individual contests, invariably characterize the track of a charge of cavalry. Within that mass, too, was borne the Imperial eagle of the 45th regiment, proudly displaying on its banner the names of *Jena*, *Austerlitz*, *Wagram*, *Eylau*, and *Friedland*—fields in which this regiment had covered itself with glory, and acquired the distinguished title of ‘The Invincibles.’ A devoted band encircled the sacred standard, which attracted the observation and excited the ambition of a daring and adventurous soldier named Ewart, a sergeant of the Greys. After a desperate struggle, evincing on his part great physical strength combined with extraordinary dexterity, he succeeded in capturing the cherished trophy.¹⁷¹ . . . Without pausing for a moment to re-form, those of the Greys who had forced

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¹⁷¹ Sergeant Ewart was sent with his trophy to Brussels, where, says Siborne, “he was received with acclamations by thousands, who came forward to welcome and congratulate him.” Like Corporal Stiles, of the Royals, who assisted Capt. Clark in taking the eagle of the 105th, Ewart was advanced to the rank of ensign. Siborne, writing in 1844, says, “This eagle now adorns the chapel of Chelsea Hospital.” Thiers, however, recounting a later stage of this same charge of the Greys, tells how Urban, a French lancer, after killing Sir Edward Ponsoby, also killed “him that holds

the standard of the 45th,” and “returns to his colonel with the trophy which he had so gloriously redeemed.” On a later page Thiers—never content with a single issue of his fabrications—says in his summary of the battle, “It was very strange that we lost but one standard, Urban, sub-officer of lancers, having recovered that of the 45th, one of the two taken from D’Erlon’s corps.” Ewart’s progress in Brussels and his promotion the following year seem to answer the story of his death at Urban’s hand; and the colour of the 45th, hanging beside that of the 105th in Chelsea Hospital, speaks

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their way through or on either flank of the mass, rushed boldly onward against the leading supporting columns of Marcognet's right brigade [*i.e.* the 26th regiment]. This body of men, lost in amazement at the suddenness, the wildness of the charge, and its terrific effect upon their countrymen on the higher ground in front, had either not taken advantage of the very few moments that intervened by preparing an effectual resistance to cavalry, or, if they attempted the necessary formation, did so when there was no longer time for its completion. Their outer files certainly opened a fire which proved very destructive to their assailants; but to such a degree had the impetus of the charge been augmented by the rapidly increasing descent of the slope, that these brave dragoons possessed as little of the power as of the will to check their speed, and they plunged down into the mass with a force that was truly irresistible. Its foremost ranks driven back with irrepressible violence, the entire column tottered for a moment, and then sank under the overpowering wave. Hundreds were crushed to rise no more; and hundreds rose again but to surrender to the victors, who speedily swept their prisoners to the rear, while the Highlanders secured those taken from the leading column."¹⁷² But a single regiment remained unbroken

for itself, like the statue which, according to Macaulay, the Roman people raised in honour of Horatius after his defence of the bridge—

"They made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands until this day,
To witness if I lie."

¹⁷² The Erckmann-Chatrian conscript's account of the charge contains incidents which only com-

port with his marching with the 25th regiment. After describing the slowness of their march because of the soft ground in the valley, he continues, "As we mounted on the other side we were met by a hail of balls from above the road at the left. If we had not been so crowded together, this terrible volley would have checked us." [This would indicate his being in the 28th regiment of Alix's division, which received the flank fire from Kempf's

of the entire ten regiments with which D'Erlon had attacked Picton—the 46th, which formed the rearmost

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28th, but the subsequent experiences do not accord with this.] . . . "Two batteries now swept our ranks, and the shot from the hedges a hundred feet distant pierced us through and through. A cry of horror burst forth, and we rushed on the batteries, overpowering the redcoats, who vainly endeavoured to stop us. . . . Every shot of the English told, and we were forced to break our ranks. Men are not palisades, and must defend themselves when attacked. Great numbers were detached from their companions, when thousands of Englishmen rose up from among the barley, and fired their muskets almost touching our men, which caused a terrible slaughter. The other ranks rushed to the support of their comrades, and we should all have been dispersed over the hillside like a swarm of ants if we had not heard the shout, 'Attention, the cavalry!' Almost at the same instant a crowd of red dragoons mounted on grey horses swept down upon us like the wind, and those who had straggled were cut to pieces without mercy. They did not fall upon our columns in order to break them; they were too deep and massive for that; but they came down between the divisions, slashing right and left with their sabres, and spurring their horses into the flanks of the columns to cut them in two, and though they could not succeed in this, they killed great numbers and threw us into confusion. . . . The worst was that at that moment their foot soldiers rallied and recommenced their fire, and they even were so bold as to attack us with

the bayonet. Only the first two ranks made a stand. It was shameful to form our men in that manner. Then the red dragoons and our columns rushed pell-mell down the hill together." = Thiers' whole account of D'Erlon's charge is extraordinary. Donzelot's division, he says, "killed a great number of the 95th [of whom only 34 were killed during the entire day], and drove back Kempt and Bylandt's battalions at the point of the bayonet." Where Marcognet charged, "the position was apparently taken, and the victory ours, when, at a signal from Gen. Picton [who by this time was dead, some distance away], Pack's Scots rose unexpectedly from among the corn." Next, "Gen. Picton orders Kempt and Pack's combined battalions [though Alix's division was between them all the while] to charge them [Marcognet] at the point of the bayonet." Lastly, "The Duke of Wellington, having hastened to the spot [he was in fact on the west of the Charleroi road, which he never crossed during the battle], attacks them with Ponsonby's 1,200 Scotch dragoons, called the Scotch Greys, from the colour of their horses." The Scots Greys, in fact, numbered 391 men, and Thiers compliments their efficiency by giving as their strength more than that of the entire Union Brigade. Tributes to this regiment were not wanting. Victor Hugo records of Napoleon that "on seeing the admirable Scots Greys massed with their superb horses, he said, 'It is a pity.'" Alison quotes the Emperor as saying of their progress during the charge in the

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supporting column of Marcognet's division. It was passed to one side by the Scots Greys as they pressed on into the valley, but was presently overwhelmed in its turn, as other British cavalry came up. = The charge of the British heavy cavalry brigades had thus been delivered with splendid effect throughout their whole line, and their success had been almost instantaneous except on the extreme right, where the cuirassiers had made an obstinate though fruitless resistance to their onset. But here too the English bore their foe before them, and, a little later than their comrades on the east of La Haye Sainte, pursued him into the valley, whither all were now riding. The 1st Life Guards followed closely on the rear of the cuirassiers, who sought to escape through the "hollow-way" by which the Charleroi road crosses the central elevation; but their numbers soon choked the narrow passage, and the rearmost were compelled to turn and renew once more the hand-to-hand contest in which they had already been worsted. The Life Guards, however, had now ridden into the fire of Bachelu's light troops (*b*) who held the central heights, and were obliged to relinquish pursuit in this direction. On their left had ridden the King's (1st) Dragoon Guards, who now crossed the Charleroi road and joined in the general dash upon the French position, in which all the horsemen east of La Haye Sainte had engaged. Now, for the first time, Lord Uxbridge had opportunity to look back for his supports, and discovered to his mortification that they were wanting: on the left the Scots Greys had not only ridden into the first line, but were dashing on most madly of all; beyond them there was no indication

valley, "*Ces terribles chevaux gris: comme ils travaillent!*" But this is on the authority of Lacoste, which is enough to discredit all stories resembling it.

that the light brigades were concerning themselves about the contest; and the only regiment retaining anything like formation was his own immediate support, the Blues, who had come up with the first line, but had been kept well in hand, and were in a condition to cover the retreat of their comrades. Lord Uxbridge sounded the halt and recall, but voice and trumpet were unavailing. He, indeed, assembled the regiments nearest himself—the 1st Life Guards, which had been checked by Bachelu's fire, and portions of the King's and 2d Life Guards,—and withdrew them to their position, covered by the Blues against the pursuit of a well-formed body of fresh cuirassiers.¹⁷³ But east of the Charleroi road there was no checking the men of the Union Brigade. Carried away by their initial success, they had scattered all that first opposed them, and ridden on, disordered as they were, until they reached the central heights. Here some of the Royals and Inniskillings were stopped by the fire of the French batteries and infantry, and followed the retreat ordered by Lord Uxbridge, in time to escape severe loss from the enemy's cavalry. But the Scots Greys, followed by many of the others, dashed up the French position and into the batteries, sabring the gunners, cutting the horses' throats and the traces, and spiking the guns and overturning them in the mud. Soon they perceived upon their left a body of fresh cavalry moving down to attack them—Jaquinot's lancers, who advanced with

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¹⁷³ Among the killed in this charge was Col. Fuller, of the King's Dragoon Guards, who fell while pursuing the cuirassiers up the French position on the east of the Charleroi road. = Lord Edward Somerset had a narrow escape while returning in rear of his men, pursued by the cuirassiers. A cannon

ball struck and overthrew his horse, just as he was about regaining the Allied position. "Scramble through the hedge," cried a passing officer, "you've not a moment to lose;" and he did so without rising from his hands and knees, barely in time to escape the cuirassiers, who drew up at the hedge.

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their right squadrons charging in open column, and the remainder spread in open lancer order over the plain, so as to destroy the English stragglers and wounded, and shelter the retreat of their own infantry. From the French right wing at the same time moved down a body of Milhaud's cuirassiers upon them.¹⁷⁴ The Greys now endeavoured to make good their retreat; but their horses were thoroughly blown from their prolonged exertions, the ground was slippery and heavy, and the dragoons, who had not a vestige of formation remaining, were overtaken by the lancers, whose fresh horses and perfect order enabled them to inflict such severe losses upon the fugitives, before they could regain the Allied position and the cover of the infantry, that little more than half of the Union Brigade reassembled.¹⁷⁵ = Vandeleur's light brigade,

¹⁷⁴ "Napoleon," says Thiers, "had seen this confusion from the height where he was stationed. He sprang on his horse and galloped across the battlefield to where Milhaud's heavy cavalry were stationed, and ordered the Travers brigade, consisting of the 7th and 12th cuirassiers, to attack the Scotch dragoons. One regiment attacked them in front, another on one flank, whilst the lancers under Gen. Jaquinot attacked them on the other." = The lancers were the 4th regiment, commanded by Col. Bro, who was severely wounded in the conflict.

¹⁷⁵ Among those who fell was the general commanding the Union Brigade, Sir William Ponsonby. He was in the first instance but poorly mounted, and had tried his horse's strength in his endeavours to head off and turn back his men from their wild onset; so that when overtaken

by the lancers in a spot of soft ground he had little chance to defend himself, and perished. Thiers tells the story thus: "The Scotch dragoons, surprised in all the confusion of pursuit, and attacked on every side, were at once cut to pieces. Our cuirassiers, inflamed with the desire of avenging the infantry, rushed on them with their long sabres and hewed them down. The 4th lancers, headed by Col. Bro, dealt with them unsparingly. A quartermaster of the lancers, named Urban, rushed into the thickest of the fight and took the brave Ponsonby, commander of the dragoons, prisoner. The Scotch seek to free their general, but Urban lays him dead at his feet; then, attacked by several dragoons, he rides directly to him that holds the standard of the 45th, unhorses him with a blow of his lance, kills him with a second, seizes the colours, kills another of

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meantime, had executed a charge that rescued the remnant of the Union Brigade from what might have proved almost annihilation. From his position in the front line on the left of Best, Vandeleur had seen that his light dragoons would be needed in support of Uxbridge's charge, and had early put them in motion; but the formation of the ground obliged him to make so great a detour to his rear that he was not yet at hand when the general charge took effect. He came up to the front of Best's brigade with his leading regiment, the 12th light dragoons,—the 16th following, and the 11th remaining in reserve upon the brow of the hill,—at the moment when it became evident that the heavy dragoons among the French batteries were about to be charged by Jaquinot's lancers. In his immediate front, and between him and the Union Brigade, was the 46th French regiment, the sole residue of D'Erlon's grand attack, which, though not yet assailed, was disordered by the overthrow of its companion regiments and had stayed its advance. Col. Frederick Ponsonby, with his 12th light dragoons, charged directly down upon the right flank of this regiment, penetrated and rode through it, and, without stopping to complete his victory or rearrange his own ranks, hastened forward to the succour of Gen. Ponsonby's brigade. He came upon the right flank of

the Scotch who is pursuing him close, and then, covered with blood, returns to his colonel with the trophy which he had so gloriously redeemed." The story of the recapture of the eagle of the 45th has already been disposed of in note 171, page 261.—The commander of the Scots Greys, Col. Hamilton, was one of the victims to his own rash valour. He gallantly headed his regiment, and was last seen, still in advance,

charging up the French heights. Another of the Greys whose death in this charge deserves mention was Sergeant Weir, pay-sergeant of his troop. His body was found with his name written on his forehead by his finger dipped in his own blood—a precaution for his identification, his comrades explained, that he might not be suspected of disappearing with the money of his troop.

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a regiment of Jaquinot's lancers in pursuit of the Greys; he struck it at full speed and almost perpendicularly, and rolled up its line; and at nearly the same moment the 16th light dragoons, with Vandeleur at their head, attacked the continuation of the lancers' line obliquely upon its front. The advance of the French light horse was thus completely checked, and Vandeleur pursued to the foot of the valley, which he had ordered his men not to pass; though some of them did so and paid for their rashness with their lives.¹⁷⁶ But the greater part of both the 12th and 16th

¹⁷⁶ Among those who were thus carried into the French position was the colonel of the 12th, the Hon. Frederick Ponsonby, who, like his namesake of the Union Brigade, was endeavouring to withdraw his men from imprudent pursuit when he was set upon by a body of French lancers, and given the first of the wounds that occasioned the horrible sufferings which he almost miraculously survived to relate. His story is so exceptional in its interest as to require quotation almost in full: "In the *mêlée* I was disabled instantly in both of my arms, and followed by a few of my men, who were presently cut down, no quarter being asked or given. I was carried on by my horse, till, receiving a blow on my head from a sabre, I was thrown senseless on my face to the ground. Recovering, I raised myself a little to look round, when a lancer passing by exclaimed, '*Tu n'es pas mort, coquin*,' and struck his lance through my back. My head dropped, the blood gushed into my mouth, a difficulty of breathing came on, and I thought all was over. Not long afterwards a *tirailleur* came up to plunder me, threatening to take my life. I told

him that he might search me, directing him to a small side pocket, in which he found three dollars, being all I had; he unloosed my stock and tore open my waistcoat, then leaving me in a very uneasy posture, and was no sooner gone than another came for the same purpose; but assuring him that I had been plundered already, he left me, when an officer, bringing up some troops (to which, probably, the *tirailleurs* belonged), and halting where I lay, stooped down and addressed me, saying he feared I was badly wounded. I replied that I was, and expressed a wish to be removed to the rear. He said it was against the order to remove even their own men, but that if they gained the day, as they probably would (for he understood the Duke of Wellington was killed, and that six of our battalions had surrendered), every attention in his power should be shown me. I complained of thirst, and he held his brandy bottle to my lips, directing one of his men to lay me straight on my side, and place a knapsack under my head. He then passed on into action, and I shall never know to whose gene-

were stopped by coming under a brisk musketry fire from that left brigade (g) of Durutte's division which had remained in the valley to support Marcognet ; and

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rosity I was indebted, as I conceive, for my life. Of what rank he was I cannot say ; he wore a blue great-coat. By-and-by another *tirailleur* came and knelt and fired over me, loading and firing many times, and conversing with great gaiety all the while ; at last he ran off, saying, '*Vous serez bien aise d'entendre que nous allons nous retirer ; bon jour, mon ami.*' While the battle continued in that part several of the wounded men and dead bodies near me were hit with the balls, which came very thick in that place. Towards evening, when the Prussians came, the continued roar of the cannon along their and the British line, growing louder and louder as they drew near, was the finest thing I ever heard. It was dusk when two squadrons of Prussian cavalry, both of them two deep, passed over me in full trot, lifting me from the ground and tumbling me about cruelly. The clatter of their approach and the apprehensions it excited may be easily conceived ; had a gun come that way it would have done for me. The battle was then nearly over, or removed to a distance ; the cries and groans of the wounded all around me became every instant more and more audible, succeeding to the shouts, imprecations, outcries of '*Vive l'Empereur,*' the terrible discharge of musketry and cannon, and every now and then intervals of silence, which were worse than the noise. I thought the night would never end. Much about this time I found a soldier of the Royals lying across my legs, who had pro-

bably crawled thither in his agony ; his weight, convulsive motions, noises, and the air issuing through a wound in his side, distressed me greatly ; the latter circumstance most of all, as the case was my own. It was not a dark night, and the Prussians were wandering about to plunder (and the scene in *Ferdinand, Count Fathom*, came into my mind, though no women, I believe, were there) ; several of them came and looked at me. About an hour before midnight I saw a soldier in an English uniform coming towards me. He was, I suspect, on the same errand. He came and looked me in the face. I spoke instantly, telling him who I was, and assuring him of a reward if he would remain by me. He said that he belonged to the 40th regiment, but had missed it. He released me from the dying man. Being unarmed, he took up a sword from the ground, and stood over me, pacing backward and forward. At 8 o'clock in the morning some English were seen in the distance ; he ran to them, and a messenger was sent off to Hervey. A cart came for me. I was placed in it and carried to a farm-house, about a mile and a half distant, and laid in the bed from which poor Gordon (as I understood afterward) had been just carried out. The jolting of the cart and the difficulty of breathing were very painful. I had received seven wounds ; a surgeon slept in my room, and I was saved by continual bleedings, one hundred and twenty ounces in two days, besides the great loss of blood on the field."

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Vandeleur, having accomplished the objects of his charge, led back his regiments to their position.¹⁷⁷= Merle's brigade of light cavalry from Collaert's Dutch-Belgian reserve division had appeared upon the brow of the Allied heights, and a few started to follow the 12th light dragoons down the slope; but presently Durutte's skirmishers began firing, and these troops made no further advance.= Vivian, whose hussar brigade held the extreme Allied left, had ridden forward in person to reconnoitre, and, as soon as he saw the charge of the Greys up the French heights, had sent for his 10th and 18th British hussars

¹⁷⁷ There is a curious silence in the English accounts of this charge as to the doings of Durutte's division on the part of the French, and of Best's and Von Vincke's brigades, in the Allied line,—which is the more noteworthy as all other bodies of troops in both armies are adequately accounted for. Brialmont gives this version of what happened, but without naming any authority:—"Durutte, less severely handled, followed the retrogressive movement of the other columns, not, however, till he had repulsed an attack of Vandeleur's light cavalry, and driven before him Best's and Vincke's Hanoverians." This, of course, refers to Durutte's left brigade (*g*), as the other was engaged with the villages on the right. = Hooper's only allusion to this part of the fight is as follows:—"On the extreme British left, the Hanoverian infantry had been menaced only by Durutte, who, partly occupied by Papelotte and La Haye, did not venture to ascend far up the slope, but, being the last to move, hung about the great battery, and afforded Marcognet some flanking protection from

Best, Vincke, and the British light cavalry whose squadrons were visible to him."= Charras says that, after his detachment against the villages, Durutte left two more battalions to guard the right of the grand battery, and advanced with the remainder of his division. "It reached the crest of the plateau in good order, passing the hedges which were much broken in this part of the enemy's line: the Hanoverians of Best and Vincke had already retreated considerably before it, at the moment when Vandeleur's light dragoons, emerging from a hollow in the ground, charged unexpectedly. Yielding under the shock, it was rolled up confusedly; but the disorder did not last; and the dragoons, fired upon point-blank, promptly withdrew to rally out of the fire." Vandeleur then went to Ponsonby's support in the valley; and, Charras continues, "Durutte, profiting by this movement and seeing there was no longer any French column on his left, put himself in retreat, showing a front against the Hanoverians, and regained his former position. His loss was 600 men."

to advance, leaving the 1st hussars of the German Legion only to protect the left flank; and he opened a fire from two of the guns of his horse-battery, to which the French rejoined with so well-directed a fire that one of their shot passed through an ammunition-box of Vivian's and exploded it. By this time Vandeleur was returning, successful, from the valley, where, of all the troops of both armies lately engaged there, only the killed and wounded remained. With a discharge of rockets, directed by Major Whinyates' rocket-troops against some French troops endeavouring to re-form upon the central elevation, and which had the effect of dispersing them under cover,¹⁷⁸ the second phase of the battle came to an end.

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The grand attack upon which Napoleon had relied for the overthrow of the Allied army had completely failed. He had meant to seize the advanced posts at either extremity and at the centre of their line, and also the Brussels highroad; he had not gained any one of them, even Papelotte and the enclosures of La Haye Sainte remaining, when the attack was over, in the hands of the Allies; and he had lost 3000 prisoners, 2 eagles, a number of killed and wounded considerably in excess of the loss by the Allies, and nearly 40 guns of his great battery had been rendered useless, while his strongest infantry corps had been overthrown and seriously disorganized, and his splendid veteran cavalry had proved unable to withstand the British horsemen.

¹⁷⁸ Sir Augustus Frazer—who, as commander of the horse-artillery, had special interest in observing the efficacy of the rockets, the use of which Wellington had so irrationally opposed, wrote of this incident:—"The rockets were used, and were useful, as I am told. I did not see their application, the Duke never

having gone more to the left than the intersection of our centre by the *pavé* [the Charleroi road], which was in a ravine, and close by a large building [La Haye Sainte] occupied alternately by friend and foe, and a point more than ordinarily murderous. The rocket troop was 200 yards to the left of this point."

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The Allies also—that is, the English and Germans—had suffered severely, though not disproportionately to the magnitude of the advantages they had secured, especially of the splendid triumphs of Picton's infantry and the cavalry brigades.

At Hougomont the contest had continued without intermission during the period of D'Erlon's attack. The defenders within the buildings and courts could not be seriously molested; but on either flank the French continued to make renewed demonstrations, which were repelled sometimes by the fire of the batteries on the Allied position or of the light troops in advance of it, sometimes by sorties of the little garrison or of troops coming to their aid from the rear. After a time this continued pressure so weakened the defence that Byng sent down a reinforcement consisting of the remainder of the 2d battalion of the 3d Guards, under Col. Hepburn, who took the command hitherto held by Lord Saltoun, whose own battalion had now completely disappeared; and these fresh troops, eager to engage, made a dash from the northern hedge upon the French tirailleurs who then held the orchard, drove them out in an unrestrained stampede, and shot down many of them while struggling to force their way through gaps in the southern hedge. Thus, at about the time D'Erlon's troops were repulsed in their attack upon the Allied left wing, the British Guards repossessed themselves of the orchard.—An attack was now attempted upon them from a new direction. A column from Bachelu's division, which had left the central elevation, moved toward the Allied position; but on receiving a musketry fire from Alten's light-troops—which had resumed their ground before the heights as soon as the cuirassiers had been driven off,—the French column swerved to its left and approached Hougomont. The

2 P.M.

2.30. P.M

movement was noted by Capt. Cleeves, commanding a 6-gun battery of the King's German Legion, posted on the brow of the height under which the column must pass. He reserved his fire until the moment when it would tell most effectually, and then rapidly threw in three rounds from each gun: the column was instantly dispersed with shocking slaughter, those who survived flying confusedly to the lower ground for shelter, leaving on the ascent they had been mounting great numbers of their killed and wounded. The French made a second attempt to advance in this direction, which was repulsed in exactly the same manner; and Bachelu then fell back to the general French position, and established his division on the right of Foy's, at some distance to the west of the Charleroi road. = Another method of dealing with Hougomont was now essayed. Napoleon caused a battery of howitzers to be brought to bear in such manner that their shells should descend into the buildings, and presently they were on fire¹⁷⁹—first the great barn, then the outhouses north of the château, the farmer's house, and at last the château itself. The flames spread rapidly, covering the buildings and their garrison with dense clouds of smoke, which rolled heavily over the Allied position, and soon the roofs began to fall in. Every possible entrance to the enclosures, meantime, was so closely beset by the beleaguering French, that the British could not for a moment suspend the defence to fight the flames or even to succour the wounded, many of whom had crawled or had

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¹⁷⁹ Sir Augustus Frazer, who was near Hougomont at this time, noted the hour at which Hougomont was fired. "At a quarter before 3," he wrote, "the large building burst out in a volume of flame, and formed a striking feature in the murderous

scene. Imagining that this fire might oblige our troops to quit a post most material, and that it would have an effect, and possibly a great one, on the day, I remarked the time by my watch."

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been carried into the buildings and now perished by a terrible death.¹⁸⁰ The Guards, however, fought on, in spite of the intense heat and suffocating smoke that enveloped them, and, after the fire had burned out the interior of the buildings, still made good their defence of the uninjured boundary walls.

The Prussians, during the second attack, had been making their way laboriously toward the French right flank, and were securing a foothold in the Wood of Paris. But they had not yet shown themselves upon the field.

The attack had been so far a partial one that the Allied right centre and right wing had remained entirely unmolested, except for an unintermitting cannonade,

¹⁸⁰ It was at this time that Sergeant Graham, of the Coldstream Guards—the same whose assistance in closing and defending the barnyard gate, is mentioned in note 144, page 228—asked permission from his commanding officer, Col. Macdonnell, to leave the defence of the garden wall for a moment. The officer expressed his surprise at such a request when they were so hard pressed, and Graham explained that he wished to rescue his brother, who lay wounded in the buildings. Receiving permission, he carried the brother out, laid him in a ditch, and resumed his place in the fight. Both brothers survived the battle. = In August, 1815, a gentleman requested the Duke of Wellington to nominate a meritorious Waterloo soldier to whom he proposed paying an annuity of 10*l.* for life. The Duke desired Sir John Byng to name a man from his brigade of Guards, and the choice fell to Graham; but he received his annuity for two years

only, owing to the bankruptcy of the donor. At the time Siborne wrote (1844), he was among the veteran inmates of the Royal Hospital of Kilmainham. = It was in the staying of the general conflagration at the entrance of the chapel that the alleged miracle occurred. Siborne's relation of the incident is as follows:—"Many who had sought shelter, or had been laid in the chapel, and whose terrors were excited as they heard the crashing fall of burning timbers or the frequent explosions of shells around them, at length beheld the flames penetrating the door of the sanctuary. The prayers that had been fervently, though silently, offered up from that holy place had surely been accepted—the fire, reaching the feet of the wooden image of the Saviour of mankind that stood above the entrance, seemed to feel the sacred presence; for here its progress terminated, and this without the aid of human efforts." (See note 112, page 186.)

from which the unengaged troops were sheltered to a certain degree by being withdrawn to the reverse slope, though even here shells reached them and round shot, which, rebounding from the outer heights, fell among the reserves in the rear.¹⁸¹ Except for this artillery duel, in which both sides engaged with equal warmth, and for the struggle that never stopped at Hougomont, there was a long interval after the close of the cavalry charges without any offensive movement by the French—an interval so long as to give rise to wondering speculation as to the nature of the next attack. During this time of inaction a partial re-arrangement of the Allied left wing was made—Sir John Lambert's brigade coming into the front line between Kempt and the Charleroi road; Pack's and Best's brigades and also Vandeleur's horsemen closing toward their right, so as to fill the gap left by the Dutch-Belgians; 3 companies of Kempt's riflemen re-occupied the sand-pit and its knoll and hedge; and 2 fresh companies from the 1st light battalion of the German Legion reinforced the 4 companies that already held La Haye Sainte.

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¹⁸¹ Of the surroundings of the second line even when sheltered from fire, a private of dragoons so stationed wrote, "We stood exactly on such a spot as enabled us to behold the last struggles of the wounded, whose strength only sufficed to carry them a few yards to the rear. There was a long sort of ditch or drain some way behind us, toward which these poor fellows betook themselves by scores; and ere three hours were passed it was choked with the bodies of those who lay down there that

they might die. Then, again, the wounded horses, of which multitudes wandered all over the field, troubled us. They would come back, some with broken legs, others trailing after them their entrails, which the round shot had knocked out, and, forcing themselves between our files, seemed to solicit the aid which no one had time to afford." It can scarcely be wondered that the beholders of such scenes disappeared from the rear of the army in great numbers.

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III. Cavalry Attacks upon the Allied Right Wing.

The French were long in renewing offensive operations, because it had become necessary to arrange an entirely new plan of action. The futility of the original design—that of crushing Wellington's left wing, and so seizing the Brussels road—had been demonstrated by the signal repulse of D'Erlon's infantry; and the disorganized condition in which it had reassembled rendered it unfit for immediate use, and forbade any demonstration in this part of the field. It thus became necessary to shift the attack to the Allied right wing. Here, accordingly, renewed efforts were to be made by the infantry, at either extremity, to carry Hougomont and La Haye Sainte—the capture of which might be followed by the breaking of the Allied centre,—while between these points an overwhelming onset of cavalry was to be directed against the Allied line. The force entrusted to Ney for this purpose consisted in the first instance of Milhaud's entire corps of cuirassiers, 21 squadrons strong; but almost at the outset Lefebvre-Desnouettes's light cavalry of the Guard—7 squadrons of lancers and 12 of chasseurs—were drawn into its support; and ultimately both Kellermann's and Guyot's corps of heavy cavalry took part in the charges—an aggregate strength of 77 squadrons, or 12,000 men, the most numerous and splendidly equipped body of horsemen that had ever charged in a mass in European warfare. But, as in the previous attack, Ney was impatient to end the battle at a stroke, and over-confident that he had provided such means to accomplish his purpose as no power of the enemy could withstand; and, as he had previously advanced his infantry columns without cavalry in close support, so now he made ready

to launch his apparently irresistible squadrons without infantry who should hold and follow up whatever advantages the horsemen might gain.¹⁸²

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¹⁸² Faulty as was the arrangement of sending the cavalry to charge without infantry supports, and ruinous as were the consequences, there can be no excuse for the manner in which it has been sought to relieve Napoleon of all blame in the matter, and charge it wholly upon Ney's headlong rashness. To this end, Thiers—whose whole account of the battle is muddled and without sequence—transfers the time of those cavalry charges to a later period of the action than that in which they occurred. He puts them after the appearance of the Prussians in the field, and after the taking of La Haye Sainte by the French infantry, whereas neither of these things occurred until the charges were far advanced. Napoleon, he represents, was in the eastern part of the field, directing Lobau's resistance to Bülow, and in ignorance what drafts Ney was making upon the cavalry until it was too late to recede. Ney, Thiers says, had already taken La Haye Sainte, sent to Napoleon for reinforcements, and, "his countenance glowing with heroic ardour, he repeatedly said to Gen. Drouot, that could he get some additional troops he would secure a brilliant victory and totally repulse the British army." But this demand, Thiers proceeds, reached the Emperor when he was using all his available infantry against the Prussians, and, accordingly, "Napoleon sent word to Ney that it would be impossible to send any infantry, but that he would send him Milhaud's cui-

rassiers provisionally, to occupy the space between La Haye Sainte and the wood of Goumont [Hougomont], and desired him to await his orders before commencing the attack that was to decide the fate of the day." Hereupon, the story goes on, Ney ordered up Milhaud, and "as Gen. Milhaud passed before Lefebvre-Desnouettes, who commanded the light cavalry of the Guard, he clasped his hand and said, 'I am going to charge: support me.' Lefebvre-Desnouettes, whose valour needed no fresh incitement, believed that it was by order of the Emperor he was desired to support the cuirassiers, and following their movement, he took up a position behind them. . . . When Ney saw such a noble body of cavalry at his disposal his confidence and daring redoubled," and, "still elated by the combat of La Haye Sainte," he began the cavalry charges. Through the false order of events thus described, Thiers, following Napoleon, begins the elaboration of his accusation that Ney destroyed the cavalry while "Napoleon was so preoccupied with the attack of the Prussians that he suspended every other action but that directed against them." = The important fact to be borne in mind is that La Haye Sainte had not been taken, and the Prussians had not begun their attack, until after both Milhaud and Lefebvre-Desnouettes were engaged in their charges on the Allied squares. Napoleon doubtless knew all about the preparation for the cavalry attack, though the Prus-

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The cannonade had never ceased during this period of preparation ; but, as all was made ready for the attack, it was suddenly increased to an unparalleled intensity. The French light batteries were pushed forward in advance, and reinforced by the heavy 12-pound guns of the Imperial Guard ; and this whole force of artillery, greatly superior to that of the Allies, was so posted that its fire could be concentrated upon any point of Wellington's line. "The guns having once obtained the required range," Siborne says, "were fired without intermission. . . . The oldest soldiers had never witnessed a cannonade conducted with such fury, with such desperation. The Allied columns of infantry were lying down upon the ground to shelter themselves as much as possible from the iron shower that fell fast and heavily—round shot tearing frightful rents directly through their masses or ploughing up the earth beside them ; shells bursting in the midst of the serried columns and scattering destruction in their fall, or previously burying themselves in the soft loose soil to be again forced upwards in eruptions of iron, mud, and stones, that fell amongst them like volcanic fragments." The British and German artillerymen, posted along the front of the position and before the Wavre road, stood firmly to their guns and directed them with great precision ; but the pieces were inferior both in

sians may have diverted his attention from its later stages. The lack of supporting infantry is to be explained on the ground that there was none available—Jerome's and Foy's divisions had their hands full with the foolish assault on Hougomont ; Donzelot's troops were busy at La Haye Sainte ; D'Erlon's corps was in process of reconstruction after its overthrow ; Lobau's corps had either

gone or was about to go to the right flank against Bülow ; and the Guard Napoleon never suffered to be touched until the last emergency. This accounts for the entire French infantry except those engaged on the right flank and the division of Bachelu : this division Ney ultimately did combine with the operations of his cavalry.

number and weight to the enemy's, and official negligence had left guns and men without any of the protection which should have been afforded by earth-works.¹⁸³ = The attack was first made at either extreme by the infantry—redoubled exertions being put forth to carry Hougomont, now in flames and still plied by the howitzers; while in the centre Donzelot's columns moved against La Haye Sainte. Baring this time made no attempt to hold the orchard, but limited his defence to the buildings, court, and garden. The rifle balls of the Germans told tremendously upon the advancing masses of the French; but these rushed through the fire up to the walls, seized the rifles through the loop-holes, and sought to pull them from the hands of the defenders. They assailed every gate and doorway in the enclosure, especially the extemporised barrier at the great western entrance to the barn, of which the door had been destroyed. Here the French pushed forward desperately, but the excellent fire of the riflemen did not allow one of the invaders to pass the threshold, beside which 17 dead bodies were afterwards found lying. Thus the contest was raging about La Haye Sainte, both parties showing the utmost determination, while the grand attack was in progress. = On the French extreme left also a demonstration was made, in advance of the general attack. Piré's lancers were seen moving forward; and Wellington, anxious for his detached forces at Braine-la-Leude, desired Lord Uxbridge to counteract them. This he did by sending Grant, with 2 regiments of light cavalry from his own brigade and 1 from Dörnberg's of the King's German Legion, to watch the operations of the enemy; but no conflict resulted from this, and Grant, presently becoming satisfied that the French horse were only

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¹⁸³ See text, and note 128, page 206.

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making a diversion, returned with the greater portion of his following and took part in the general action with the French assailing cavalry.

Milhaud's cuirassiers, followed by the light cavalry of the Guard, had meanwhile put themselves in motion. As they were drawn up on the eastern side of the Charleroi road, they were obliged in the first instance to cross that road and oblique considerably to their left, so as to take a position facing the opening between Hougomont and La Haye Sainte—a position from which the formation of the ground enabled them to advance directly upon the Allied heights without descending into the valley.¹⁸⁴ The movement was made in beautiful order. “As they began to advance,” says Siborne, “the first line of cuirassiers shone in burnished steel, relieved by black horsehair-crested helmets; next came the red lancers of the Guard, in their gaudy uniform, and mounted on richly caparisoned steeds, their fluttering lance-flags heightening the brilliancy of their display; whilst the third line, comprising the chasseurs of the Guard, in their rich costume of green and gold, with fur-trimmed pelisses *à la hussard*, and black bear-skin shakos, completed the gorgeous yet harmonious colouring of this

¹⁸⁴ The spurs from the central elevation, which formed a continuous and almost level approach from La Belle Alliance to the centre of the right wing of the Allied army, have been described on page 183. This peculiar conformation must be borne in mind to render the charges of the cavalry intelligible. = There must also be recollected the explanation quoted from Kennedy (note 120, p. 199) of the space occupied by troops in line. He adds, “The distance between Hougomont and La Haye Sainte is 1,000 yards . . . It was on this

front of 1,000 yards that the great charges of the French cavalry were made, consequently 1,000 horsemen would have filled the whole of it; which proves that not more than, say, 500 men could have been in their front line, as they had to keep at some distance from the fire of both Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, and they charged with intervals: 12,000 cavalry, therefore, on this front, might charge in 24 successive lines, supposing each line to be a single rank.”

military spectacle." Upon the spot menaced by the advancing enemy—nearly that where the Belgian lion now stands—were gathered Gen. Alten and the staff of the 3d division, anxious to learn what was portended by the tremendous artillery fire ; and as soon as the cavalry were seen to be in motion the division was ordered to assume the formation which had been devised in anticipation of this mode of attack. "Our surprise," says Kennedy, who was one of Alten's staff, "at being so soon attacked by this great and magnificent force of cavalry was accompanied with the opinion that the attack was premature, and that we were perfectly prepared and secure against its effects, so far as any military operation can be calculated upon."¹⁸⁵

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¹⁸⁵ This preparation is best accounted for and described by Kennedy himself, who designed it. "When, on the morning of the 18th of June," he says, "the enemy's formation clearly indicated an attack on the British position, General the Prince of Orange, who commanded the corps, and General Baron Alten, who commanded the 3d division, discussed for some time how the division should be formed in order of battle. The Duke of Wellington having joined them during the discussion, and being referred to, replied shortly, 'Form in the usual way,' and rode on. This did not solve the difficulty, as it was felt that the position of the division exposed it greatly to the fire of the enemy's artillery, and to the action of his numerous and formidable cavalry. The discussion having been continued for some time after the Duke had gone, and no determination arrived at, I asked Gen. Alten if he would allow me to form the division. To this

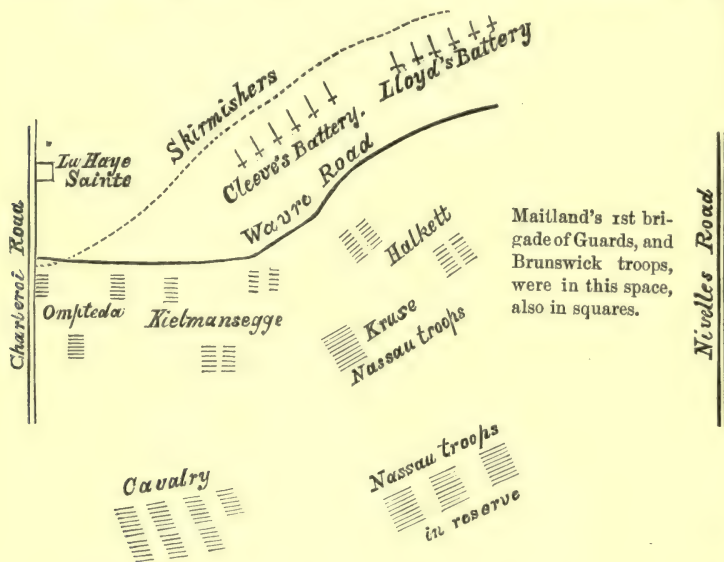
he at once and unqualifiedly assented, upon which I instantly left him, and proceeded with the formation. . . . The principles and considerations which guided me in making the formation were as follows:—The French cavalry had, on the 16th, proved itself very formidable at Quatre Bras in its attacks upon the 3d division. That cavalry in immensely augmented numbers was now forming opposite to the division, and the ground between them and us presented no natural obstacle whatever. It was at the same time evident, from the way in which the French guns were taking up their ground, that the division would be exposed to a severe artillery fire. It was, therefore, of the highest importance that the formation of the division should be such that its passing from line into a formation for resisting cavalry should be as rapid as possible, and that the re-formation of the line should also be made rapidly. To carry these views into

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The 3d division was at once formed to resist cavalry; and on its right the Guards, together with some of the



Brunswick troops, formed squares; so that the space

effect the strong battalions formed each an oblong on the two centre companies, and when the battalions were weak two were joined, the right-hand battalion of the two forming left in front, and the left-hand battalion right in front, each in column of companies. The fronts of the oblongs were formed by four companies, and the rear faces of the oblongs were of the same strength, and the sides of one company each, which were formed by the outward wheel of subdivisions. . . . The front line consisted of five of these oblongs, and the second line of four of them, and they were so placed as to be as nearly as possible in echelon, that is, placed in such a way that the oblongs of the second line

stood opposite to the openings of the first line. . . . These arrangements were only in preparation [when the battle began]; the division remained deployed in two lines, its proper order of battle, but ready to form in oblongs when such formation might be required; while merely under the continued severe cannonade the division lay down in line." Kennedy further explains that, owing to the deficiency of troops in the 3d division—which consisted of 6,000 men in three brigades—Gen. Kruse, commanding the Nassau troops in the second line, participated in this formation. The plan which illustrates it is copied from Kennedy's sketch, which he made on the morning after the battle.

between the Charleroi and Nivelles roads was thus filled up; while the artillery was before the infantry on the front slope. The cuirassiers rode forward in lines of columns, at first slowly, but with increased speed as they reached the point where their own supporting batteries suspended their fire and that of the Allies began to tell among their ranks. The grape-shot from Cleeves' and Lloyd's guns brought down many of them, but did not check their progress; they came on more rapidly, with their shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" until they were within about 40 yards of the guns; then the Allied artillerymen delivered with tremendous effect a last discharge from every gun, and withdrew to the shelter of the squares.¹⁸⁶ The cuirassiers were somewhat staggered by this salvo, and their order was broken, but they never faltered; the charge sounded, and they dashed into the batteries, sending up cries of triumph at having captured them, and pressed onward to charge the squares beyond, in the full assurance of victory—an assurance shared by Lefebvre-Desnouettes's light horsemen in the rear, who now followed with the utmost impetuosity, to aid in the

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¹⁸⁶ This abandonment of the guns by the artillerymen was part of the plan laid down in advance by the Duke of Wellington. It is thus spoken of by Baron Muffling in his report on the battle:—"The English artillery have a rule not to remove their guns when attacked by cavalry in a defensive position. The field-pieces are worked till the last moment, and the men then throw themselves into the nearest square, bearing off the implements they use in serving the guns. If the attack is repulsed, the artillerymen hurry back to their pieces, to fire on the retreating enemy. This is an ex-

tremely laudable practice, if the infantry be properly arranged to correspond with it." It is to be remarked that neither in this nor in any of the charges that followed is there any mention, except by Victor Hugo, of the French spiking or otherwise disabling the guns while they had possession of them. The horses, of course, had been previously removed. = The charge was led by Ney in person. "The Marshal of the Empire," says Charras, "had not forgotten the brilliant cavalry general of the Republic. Ney put himself at the head of the cuirassed squadrons."

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anticipated rout and pursuit of the infantry in the squares. But the squares gave no signs of wavering—they were “prepared,” the front rank kneeling, the second at the charge, the third and fourth ready to fire when the time came. The fire was reserved until the enemy was within about 30 paces, when—though many, especially of those to whom the experience was novel, aimed too high—it threw the approaching squadrons into disorder, and had the effect of causing the horsemen who confronted the face of a square to swerve to the right hand or the left and pass into the intervals between the squares—that is, into the line of fire from another face. Here, as at Quatre Bras, the French cavalry never actually rushed in upon a square, to break it; and none was even shaken; but—as Kennedy, who was within a square, says—“Although they did not gallop in mass right on the bayonets of the infantry, they made every other effort to enter the oblongs, by firing into them, cutting aside the bayonets, and surrounding the oblongs to obtain a point of entrance.”¹⁸⁷ By thus riding around and between the

¹⁸⁷ Another who was within the squares, an officer of engineers, gives his experience in detail:—“The first time a body of cuirassiers approached the square into which I had ridden, the men—all young soldiers—seemed to be alarmed. They fired high, and with little effect; and in one of the angles there was just as much hesitation as made me feel exceedingly uncomfortable; but it did not last long. No actual dash was made upon us. Now and then an individual more daring than the rest would ride up to the bayonets, wave his sword about, and bully; but the mass held aloof, pulling up within five or six yards, as if, though afraid

to go on, they were ashamed to retire. Our men soon discovered that they had the best of it; and ever afterwards, when they heard the sound of cavalry approaching, appeared to consider the circumstance as a pleasant change; for the enemy’s guns suspended their fire regularly as the horsemen began to crown the ridge, and we suffered so much from their artillery practice that we were glad when anything put a temporary stop to it. As to the squares themselves, they were as firm as rocks; and the jokes which the men cracked while loading and firing were very comical.”=It is remarkable that all the charges of this veteran French

squares, and especially because of the increasing obstructions from the bodies of fallen men and horses, the

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cavalry failed to break a single Allied square. Apprehensions were felt about the steadiness of some of the Brunswick battalions, raw troops, which had been brought up into the extreme right of the first line to fill the gap left by advancing Byng's Guards into Hougomont; and the 23d British regiment, of Mitchell's brigade, was interposed between their squares to give them confidence; but these young Brunswickers met the onset of the cavalry with all the firmness of veterans. Capt. Pringle's account of the battle, written shortly afterwards, observes, "The French accounts say that several squares were broken and standards taken, which is decidedly false: on the contrary, the small squares always repulsed the cavalry, whom they generally allowed to advance close to their bayonets before they fired." Kennedy, in like manner, says, "In no instance was there one of them penetrated or overthrown." Thiers, however, knows better. He gives this story:—"Having passed the line of guns, and seeing Alten's infantry apparently in retreat, he [Ney] sent his cuirassiers after them. These brave horsemen, heedless of the balls raining around, galloped after Alten's division, broke the squares, and commenced a furious slaughter. . . . Several battalions of the German and Hanoverian legions were overpowered, trodden under foot, put to the sword, and deprived of their standards. Our cuirassiers, the oldest soldiers of the army, glutted their rage by a merciless massacre of the English." This was

in the first charge; subsequently, according to Thiers, Ney's reinforced cavalry "attacked and broke the enemy's first line. Alten's unfortunate division, already so ill-treated, was now entirely cut to pieces, together with the 69th English regiment . . . Ney . . . advanced on the second line. . . . Several squares were broken. . . . The heavy cavalry of the Guard did wonders, breaking the squares . . . Kellermann's carbiniers . . . made fresh breaches in the second line of the British infantry, broke several squares, cut the men in pieces, even under the fire of the third line, and destroyed three-fourths of that second human wall, without being able to reach or touch the third." It is interesting to test Thiers' statements by applying figures in the rare cases when he is definite enough to render this possible. He refrains, for instance, from saying how many squares were broken, but makes it appear that somewhere from 30 to 40 so suffered; there were in fact fewer than 20 squares to begin with, and of these not one was broken. He tells us, again, that Alten's division and the British 69th regiment were "now entirely cut to pieces:" Alten's division really suffered very much more from its defence of La Haye Sainte than it did from the cavalry attacks, but its total loss for the day was 2,121 men, out of a total strength of 6,970, so that it was not "entirely" destroyed; the 69th regiment began the campaign 516 strong, lost 152 at Quatre Bras through the Prince of Orange's blunder in deploying it be-

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order of the assailants was lost, regiments and squadrons were intermixed, and their power to act as a coherent force was gone, when the Allied cavalry made ready to charge them. These, though comparatively few in number, had the advantage of being in perfect order, and could, moreover, select the most favourable point for attacking. Here and there they encountered some isolated attempts at resistance by the French horsemen; but they everywhere soon succeeded in forcing them to retire, and drove them confusedly from the plateau—their flight being hastened by the fire from the Allied batteries, which were promptly manned by the artillerymen emerging from the squares. The Allied cavalry had been instructed to stay their pursuit as soon as the repulse of the enemy had been effected; but, as usual, the excitement proved too much for them, and many—especially of Dörnberg's 23d British light dragoons—rode after the cuirassiers and lancers as far as the French position, and even attacked the batteries on the central elevation; and for this temerity they suffered severely before they could accomplish their return. On the Allied right, Dörnberg's 1st light dragoons of the German Legion pursued an outnumbering body of lancers, who presently rallied and became the pursuers; but as they followed up the ridge behind Hougomont they came under the fire both of the squares and of Bolton's foot-battery, which,

fore an attack of cavalry, entered Waterloo with 364 men, and lost on this day just 84. As to the "third line" of which Thiers frequently speaks, there was no such thing, except a few battalions of Kruse's Nassau troops in reserve, whose presence was not required in the second line. = Victor Hugo, about as accurate historically as Thiers, but more

explicit, says in the matter of the squares, "The cuirassiers annihilated 7 squares out of 13, captured or spiked 60 guns, and took 6 English regimental flags." Thiers so invariably gives his countrymen the advantage in every detail of this battle that they must be greatly puzzled to understand how, in the aggregate, they came to be defeated.

posted on the west of the Nivelles road, fired through the interval between the squares in its front and swept this approach—an assistance most essential to the Allied cavalry, because Grant's departure to follow Piré had left only the Brunswick horsemen, the 7th hussars, and the 1st light dragoons to support all that part of the front line from Alten's division to the Nivelles road. Thus was completed the repulse of the first charge of the French cavalry.¹⁸⁸ Again their

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¹⁸⁸ It is only to the opening of this first charge that it is possible to refer Victor Hugo's wonderful story of cuirassiers swallowed up by hundreds in a chasm, because it was only then that Milhaud's corps moved from the position he designates. Referring to its author's sinister description of the Wavre road and its "hollow-way" (note 109, page 180), and to the incident of some of Kellermann's cuirassiers falling into the sand-pit beside the Charleroi road (note 166, page 256), the story in *Les Misérables* is here given in full:—

"A SURPRISE.

"They were three thousand five hundred in number, and formed a front a quarter of a league in length; they were gigantic men mounted on colossal horses. They formed twenty-six squadrons, and had behind them, as a support, Lefebvre-Desnouettes's division, composed of the one hundred and six gendarmes, the chasseurs of the Guard, eleven hundred and ninety-seven sabres, and the lancers of the Guard, eight hundred and eighty lances. They wore a helmet without a plume, and a cuirass of wrought steel, and were armed with pistols and a straight sabre. In the morning the whole army had ad-

mired them when they came up, at nine o'clock, with bugles sounding, while all the bands played *Veillons au salut de l'Empire*, in close column with one battery on their flank, the others in their centre, and deployed in two ranks, and took their place in that powerful second line, so skilfully formed by Napoleon, which, having at its extreme left Kellermann's cuirassiers, and on its extreme right Milhaud's cuirassiers, seemed to be endowed with two wings of steel.—The aide-de-camp Bernard carried to them the Emperor's order: Ney drew his sabre and placed himself at their head, and the mighty squadrons started. Then a formidable spectacle was seen: the whole of this cavalry, with raised sabres, with standards flying, and formed in columns of division, descended, with one movement and as one man, with the precision of a bronze battering-ram opening a breach, the hill of La Belle Alliance. They entered the formidable valley in which so many men had already fallen, disappeared in the smoke, and then, emerging from the gloom, reappeared on the other side of the valley, still in a close compact column, mounting at a trot, under a tremendous canister fire, the fright-

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batteries resumed the tremendous cannonade, which was far more destructive to the infantry than the onset

ful muddy incline of the plateau of Mont St. Jean. They ascended it, stern, threatening, and imperturbable; between the breaks in the artillery and musketry fire, the colossal tramp could be heard. As they formed two divisions, they were in two columns: Wautier's division was on the right, Delort's on the left. At the distance it appeared as if two immense steel lizards were crawling towards the crest of the plateau; they traversed the battlefield like a flash. = Nothing like it had been seen since the capture of the great redoubt of the Moskowa by the heavy cavalry: Murat was missing, but Ney was there. It seemed as if this mass had become a monster, and had but one soul; each squadron undulated, and swelled like the rings of a polype. This could be seen through a vast smoke which was rent asunder at intervals; it was a pell-mell of helmets, shouts, and sabres, a stormy bounding of horses among cannon, and a disciplined and terrible array; while above it all flashed the cuirasses like the scales of the dragon. Such narratives seem to belong to another age; something like this vision was doubtless traceable in the old Orphean epics describing the men-horses, the ancient hippantropists, those Titans with human faces and equestrian chest, whose gallop escalated Olympus,—horrible, sublime, invulnerable beings, gods and brutes. It was a curious numerical coincidence that twenty-six battalions were preparing to receive the charge of these twenty-six squadrons. Behind the crest of the plateau, in the shadow of the masked battery, thirteen English squares,

each of two battalions, and formed two deep, with seven men in the first lines, and six in the second, were waiting, calm, dumb, and motionless, with their muskets, for what was coming. They did not see the cuirassiers, and the cuirassiers did not see them: they merely heard this tide of men ascending. They heard the swelling sound of three thousand horses, the alternating and symmetrical sound of the hoof, the clang of the cuirasses, the clash of the sabres, and a species of great and formidable breathing. There was a long and terrible silence, and then a long file of raised arms brandishing sabres, and helmets, and bugles, and standards, and three thousand heads with great moustaches, shouting, '*Vive l'Empereur*,' appeared above the crest. The whole of this cavalry debouched on the plateau, and it was like the commencement of an earthquake. = All at once, terrible to relate, the head of the column of cuirassiers facing the English left reared with a fearful clamour. On reaching the culminating point of the crest, furious and eager to make their exterminating dash on the English squares and guns, the cuirassiers noticed between them and the English a trench, a grave. It was the hollow road of Ohain. It was a frightful moment,—the ravine was there unexpected, yawning, almost precipitous, beneath the horses' feet, and with a depth of twelve feet between its two sides. The second rank thrust the first into the abyss; the horses reared, fell back, slipped with all four feet in the air, crushing and throwing their riders. There

of the horsemen; and, as before, the British and German gunners replied effectively. = The cuirassiers and lancers hastened to get into order, as if indignant at the unwonted experience of a fruitless charge. The same 40 squadrons were to attack again; but this time a portion were to be restrained from the indiscriminate onset which had been productive of such confusion, and were kept well in hand to encounter the Allied cavalry when they should move against the squadrons broken among the squares. The scenes of the former charge were repeated—the dash through the battery fire, the taking of the guns, the withdrawal of the artillerymen, the unflinching steadiness of the squares, the vain assault upon them, and the disorder and loss of those who made it. Then, when these were exhausted, their reserved cavalry came forward in good order to attack the second Allied line, consisting of cavalry—of the remnant of Somerset's Household Brigade, in rear of Ompteda's squares; Dörnberg's 23d British light dragoons, with Trip's Dutch-Belgian carbineers (perfectly useless) behind them, both in rear of Halkett's

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was no means of escaping; the entire column was one huge projectile. The force acquired to crush the English, crushed the French, and the inexorable ravine would not yield till it was filled up. Men and horses rolled into it pell-mell, crushing each other and making one large charnel-house of the gulf; and when this grave was full of living men, the rest passed over them. Nearly one-third of Dubois' brigade rolled into this abyss. This commenced the loss of the battle. A local tradition, which evidently exaggerates, says that two thousand horses and fifteen hundred men were buried in the "hollow-way"

of Ohain. These figures probably comprise the other corpses cast into the ravine on the day after the battle. Napoleon, before ordering this charge, had surveyed the ground, but had been unable to see this "hollow-way," which did not form even a ripple on the crest of the plateau. Warned, however, by the little white chapel which marks its juncture with the Nivelles road, he had asked Lacoste a question, probably as to whether there was any obstacle. The guide answered, No, and we might almost say that Napoleon's catastrophe was brought about by a peasant's shake of the head."

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5th British brigade of infantry; to their right the Brunswick hussars and lancers; and, next to the Nivelles road, Grant's 7th British hussars. The Allied horsemen did not wait for the attack, but met it; and a close and obstinately disputed struggle ensued, gallantly contested on either side. But the French had not only their immediate opponents to deal with: a severe musketry fire was poured into them from the squares on either flank; and they were at length compelled to go about and retire, pursued again into the valley by the victors.¹⁸⁹ = This pursuit, which terminated the

¹⁸⁹ Thiers' account of this combat between the French and Allied cavalry is as follows:—"All are intermingled; a thousand hand-to-hand fights commenced with swords and lances by the horsemen of both nations. Ours had the advantage, and a portion of the English cavalry strewed the ground. Those who escaped took refuge behind the squares of the English infantry, and our horsemen were again stopped in their onward course, to the great detriment of the light cavalry of the Guard, who, being unprovided with cuirasses, lost a number of men and horses. Ney had two horses killed under him during this outburst of furious human passion. His coat and hat were riddled with balls, but, still invulnerable, the bravest of the brave was still determined to keep his oath and break the British lines." = The Erckmann - Chatrian conscript gives this account:—"I could see through the smoke that the English gunners had abandoned their cannon, and were running away with their horses, and that our cuirassiers had immediately fallen upon the squares which were marked out on the hillside by the zigzag

line of their fire. = Nothing could be heard but a grand uproar of cries, incessant clashing of arms, and neighing of horses, varied with the discharge from time to time, and then new shouts, new tumults, and fresh groans. A score of horses with their manes erect rushed through the thick smoke which settled around us like shadows; some of them dragging their riders with one foot caught in the stirrup. . . . At each new charge it seemed as if the squares must be overthrown; but when the trumpet sounded the signal for rallying, and the squadrons rushed pell-mell back to the edge of the plateau to re-form, pursued by the showers of shot, there were the great red lines steadfast as walls in the smoke." = Jomini, with justifiable pride in his countrymen, says of these charges in his *Summary of the Campaign*:—"It would be necessary to borrow the most poetic forms and expressions of an epic to depict with any truthfulness the glorious efforts of this cavalry, and the impassive perseverance of its adversaries. We can besides judge what would have been the result of these brilliant charges had Lobau's corps and the Young

second of the cavalry charges, brought a momentary relief to the defenders of the Allied outposts. At

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Guard been able to follow the cuirassiers in their course, instead of being engaged toward Planchenoit, making head against the Prussians." Elsewhere Jomini says, in a foot-note: "The Duke of Wellington himself assured me, at the Congress of Verona, that he had never seen anything more admirable in war than the ten or twelve reiterated charges of the French cuirassiers upon the troops of all arms." = Charras says of the second series of charges: "The shock was terrible, according to the unanimous testimony of the actors and witnesses of this grand drama; but it was not in excess of the stubborn courage of Wellington and his soldiers. Vainly Ney engaged his very last squadron, even the brigade of carbiniers left in reserve; vainly the light batteries poured their fire upon the battalions in the first line; vainly were whole squares taken in rear, dispersed, crushed, Alten's whole division tumbled back upon the Brussels road; vainly were the numerous [Allied] squadrons that came to the rescue of their infantry sabred, mutilated, shattered. The British flag continued to float above the fatal plateau; and after a strife of nearly two hours, a strife unexampled in the annals of war, our cavalry, disorganised by incessant efforts, by the chances of the *mêlée*, their arms fatigued by dealing so many blows, their horses lamed, harassed by such violent movement over the miry soil, began to dissolve, fuming with rage, and re-descend the slope they had climbed with the conviction of success. This movement,

it has been said, worked itself, in some fashion, as the result of individual exhaustion. It was that there are limits to the power of the most vigorous organizations. . . . Ney had left, stretched upon the plain, a third of his men and horses, and those who remained were little capable of further efforts. Among the horsemen who had returned many were dismounted. The division-generals L'Héritier, Delort, Colbert, the brigadiers Travers, Dnop, Blancard, and others still had been wounded or bruised and mashed in the clash of riding; many colonels were killed. Each regiment formed no more than a squadron." = Sir Augustus Frazer, who was most of the time beside the Duke, and an eye-witness of this part of the action, thus described these charges in a letter written on the evening after the battle:—"The French cavalry made some of the boldest charges I ever saw; they sounded the whole extent of our line, which was thrown into squares. [Frazer has elsewhere said that he saw nothing of what passed on the east of the Charleroi road.] Never did cavalry behave so nobly, or was received by infantry so firmly. Our guns were taken and retaken repeatedly." In a subsequent and more detailed letter Frazer wrote: "The French cavalry, advancing with an intrepidity unparalleled, attacked at once the right and centre of our position, their advance protected by a cannonade more violent than ever. Behind the crest of the position . . . the infantry . . . were in a great measure

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Hougomont a body of French infantry had followed in the rear of the cavalry advance and turned the flank of the Guards who held the orchard, compelling them to retire into the "hollow-way" along its northern boundary; but the Allied cavalry now drove back those of the French infantry who were in the open field, and Hepburn led his Guards against those in the orchard, dislodged them, and once more repossessed himself of it. La Haye Sainte during all this time had been very hard pressed, and the riflemen, firing continually, had nearly exhausted their ammunition at the time when the rush of flying and pursuing horsemen carried away with it those of Donzelot's infantry who were on the western side of the buildings. Their withdrawal, seconded by redoubled exertions on the part of the garrison, was followed by the retirement of the other besiegers, and the whole front of the Allied position was cleared of enemies. Baring seized the opportunity to send for ammunition—which was promised, but not forwarded,—and his men improved the time to repair

sheltered by the nature of the ground—in great measure, too, by their lying down, by order. On the approach—the majestic approach—of the French cavalry, the squares rose, and, with a steadiness almost inconceivable, awaited, without firing, the rush of the cavalry, who, after making some fruitless efforts, sweeping the whole artillery of the line, and receiving the fire of the squares as they passed, retired, followed by and pell-mell with our own cavalry, who, formed behind our squares, advanced on the first appearance (which was unexpected) of the enemy's squadrons. . . . The repeated charges of the enemy's noble cavalry were similar to the first;

each was fruitless. Not an infantry soldier moved, and on each charge, abandoning their guns, our [artillery] men sheltered themselves between the flanks of the squares. Twice, however, the enemy tried to charge in front; these attempts were entirely frustrated by the fire of the guns, wisely reserved till the hostile squadrons were within twenty yards of the muzzles. . . . The obstinacy of these attacks made our situation critical; though never forced, our ranks were becoming thin. . . . Had Napoleon supported his first cavalry attacks on both flanks by masses of infantry, he had gained the day."

the damages to their stronghold and prepare as far as possible for the next attack.

Ney, repulsed in his two grand cavalry attacks, instantly set himself to the preparation of a third, with augmented force. Napoleon—either of his own accord or at Ney's solicitation—sent him Kellermann's corps of heavy cavalry, consisting of 7 squadrons of dragoons, 11 of cuirassiers, and 6 of carbineers; and to this was further added—by Ney, without the Emperor's authorisation, some have said; against the Emperor's express orders, as others state it; by their own spontaneous impulse, as Thiers believes—Guyot's division of the heavy cavalry of the Guard, composed of 6 squadrons of horse-grenadiers and 7 of dragoons,—a total addition of 37 fresh squadrons to the 40 which had already charged.¹⁹⁰ Wellington's ranks, foot and horse, were

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¹⁹⁰ Thiers gives this account of the manner in which Ney procured Kellermann's corps, after the failure of his second charge:—"Napoleon, whose attention was attracted by the frightful tumult caused by the cavalry, saw what Ney's impatience had led him to attempt. All who surrounded him applauded, but this consummate captain, who had fought more than fifty pitched battles, exclaimed, 'He has begun an hour too soon.' 'This man,' added Marshal Soult, speaking of Ney, 'this man is always the same! He will compromise everything, as he did at Jena and Eylau!' Still Napoleon thought it better to support him in what he had commenced, and sent orders to Kellermann to support Milhaud's cuirassiers. Kellermann's 3,000 cuirassiers were stationed in front of the heavy cavalry of the Guard, consisting of 2,000 mounted grenadiers

and dragoons, all eager for action, the cavalry being quite as zealous as the infantry on this most fatal day. = Kellermann, who had had some experience at Quatre Bras of what he called Ney's foolish zeal, condemned the desperate use which at this moment was made of the cavalry. Distrusting the result, he kept back one of his brigades, the carbineers, and most unwillingly sent the remainder to Ney." These were the only reinforcements brought by Ney for the third charge, according to Thiers, who does not bring Kellermann's remaining brigade or Guyot's division into action until what is here considered the fourth and final charge, though Thiers terms it "the eleventh." Probably the 12,000 horsemen were not all in action at any one time, and it certainly cannot be told at what moment each corps entered it.

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greatly wasted both by the previous attacks and by the storm of shot and shell that preluded them; but the squares, though diminished, were steady as ever, and justified their leader's resolution to hold his ground until that relief should come from the Prussians which he knew could not be much longer deferred, and which, indeed, was already on the point of telling in his aid, though he was yet unaware of it. Satisfied by this time that no attack was meditated beyond the extreme right of his main force, Wellington now ordered Chassé to evacuate Braine-la-Leude, and bring his Dutch-Belgian division, by way of Merbe Braine, to relieve troops in his second line whom it was becoming necessary to advance into the first. Before this was accomplished, however, Ney's new cavalry force had worn themselves out among the squares as their predecessors had done; parties of horsemen, separated from their proper corps, had withdrawn into the valley; broken squadrons had retired to re-form, and presently the movement of retreat became general. The Allied dragoons, held in reserve until the favourable moment, now fell upon them and converted their retreat into a disorderly flight; and the Allied artillery, again opening upon their rear, multiplied the losses they had already suffered from the musketry of the squares. During this third charge by the cavalry Donzelot's troops had again returned to their attack upon La Haye Sainte. Baring, seeing their approach, sent again for ammunition, instead of which another of Ompteda's companies of the German Legion reinforced him. For half an hour longer he made good his stand, and then sent for the third time for ammunition, and again was disappointed, being given only additional reinforcements, — 2 Nassau companies, who had indeed their own musketry ammunition, but it was useless for his rifles.

Still, however, he had succeeded in holding back the French, who were persistent in their efforts to enter at the doorless entrance to the barn, but were uniformly driven back. At last they had recourse to the expedient tried at Hougomont, and fired the barn. A thick smoke poured out, and for a moment the garrison were in dismay; for, although there was a pond in the yard, they found no vessels for carrying water until Baring's eye chanced to fall upon the camp-kettles which adorned the knapsacks of the men of the 2 Nassau companies. He snatched one and filled it; his example was quickly followed; and the fire was extinguished; though numbers of his men were shot down while exposing themselves in approaching the flames. This danger was passed, and the French, tired out by this unfaltering resistance and convinced that the place was impregnable, retired from the unpromising task. Outside the enclosure of La Haye Sainte, meanwhile, the French had succeeded in inflicting a severe blow upon a portion of Ompteda's already diminished troops. A portion of Donzelot's force had passed on into the rear of the buildings, seeking either to attack them through the garden or to isolate them from the Allied position. The Prince of Orange took this to be a good opportunity to attack, and ordered 2 battalions of the Legion to advance upon the Wavre road, when the Germans were set upon in flank by a body of cuirassiers that had just desisted from a charge upon Kielmansegge's squares. One battalion was succoured by Somerset's dragoons in time to save it from severe loss; but the other was more advanced, was taken wholly by surprise, and was almost totally destroyed by the cuirassiers—its commander and most of its officers falling and its colour being taken, while only a scanty remnant escaped to the rear of the "hollow-

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way.”¹⁹¹ While these operations were going on about La Haye Sainte, Ney was also preparing Bachelu’s division to direct a heavy attack against the centre of the Allied right wing. But this did not take effect until a later stage of the battle; and at the time of the infantry combats just described the final charge of the French cavalry was taking place.=The third attack by the French horsemen upon the squares had scarcely been repelled, and the Allied artillery had had time to throw but a few rounds of shot into their retiring masses, when a fourth onset was made by another body of cavalry.¹⁹² This fourth charge resembled the pre-

¹⁹¹ The overthrow of this battalion of the King’s German Legion seems to be the only foundation for the stories of broken squares and captured standards upon which Thiers, Hugo, and their countrymen in general have enlarged.

¹⁹² Thiers’ account would make these new assailants to be Guyot’s corps, who did not follow Kellermann at the time of the third charge. His story is as follows:—“Notwithstanding the desperate resistance that they met, he still hoped to destroy the English army at the point of the sword. He unexpectedly received a fresh reinforcement. Whilst this Titanic combat was going on, the heavy cavalry of the Guard hastened forward, though nobody knew why. These had been stationed in a slight hollow somewhat in the rear, when some officers having advanced to assist Ney in this gigantic conflict, believing that he had conquered, brandished their sabres, and cried ‘Victory!’ At this cry other officers rushed forward, and the nearest squadron, regarding this as a signal to charge, advanced at a trot.

The entire mass followed, yielding to a species of mechanical impulse; the 2,000 dragoons and mounted grenadiers ascended the plateau, trampling through wet and muddy ground. Bertrand being sent by Napoleon to keep them back, hastened to do so, but could not overtake them. Ney profited by this unexpected reinforcement, and directed it against the brazen wall he was endeavouring to batter down. . . . Ney, whom nothing could daunt, sent forward Milhaud’s cavalry, who had got a few moments’ rest, and he thus kept up a kind of continual charge, each squadron after attacking the enemy falling back to form, and then return to the attack. . . . Ney, seeing Kellermann’s carbiniers in reserve, hastened to where they were, asked what they were doing, and then, despite of Kellermann’s resistance, led them against the enemy. . . . Ney still persisted, and for the eleventh time led on his 10,000 to the attack, killing as they went, but still unable to subdue the firmness of the infantry that, though shaken for a moment, again closed their ranks, fell into line, and

vicious ones in most of its details, but had this distinguishing feature—that a special effort was made against the right of the Allied line at the point where the young Brunswick troops were stationed and where the cavalry support had hitherto been weakest. But just as the charge fell, Grant, returning from his watch of Piré,¹⁹³ came up with two fresh regiments to the endangered point. A body of French horsemen, coming from the eastern edge of the Hougomont enclosures, was in the act of charging up the slope upon the Brunswick squares, when Grant, with the 13th light dragoons, rode down upon them from the height and drove them back some 300 yards, into the valley; and on his left he was supported by his 15th hussars, who at the same time fell upon a party of cuirassiers, whom they also routed. The defeated French retired to the main body of their cavalry, who were in the act of advancing; and the two British regiments withdrew before this great force through the intervals between the squares, whose steadiness they had ensured by their timely and efficient interposition. Once among the squares, the French fared no better than in their pre-

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continued to fire. Ney, foaming with excitement and bareheaded, his fourth horse shot under him, his coat pierced with bullets, covered with contusions, but fortunately not seriously injured, said to Col. Heymès that, if he could get the infantry of the Guard, he would destroy the exhausted English infantry, whose strength was nearly spent. He sent him to ask Napoleon for this reinforcement." = As to the correctness of Ney's judgment on this occasion, see the opinion of the English artillery commander, Sir

Augustus Frazer, at the close of note 189, page 292.

¹⁹³ Grant had been detained by Piré's demonstrations before the extreme French left until he witnessed the second and apparently successful charge of the cuirassiers. Then, knowing the weakness of the Allies in cavalry in that part of the field, he resolved to return, leaving one of his squadrons to watch Piré, and he reached the field thus opportunely with the remainder of his force.

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vious attacks. They rode vainly round and round them, seeking an opening which they might penetrate, fencing with their sabres against the bayonets, firing their pistols into the ranks; but nowhere could they make any impression. In all the spaces between the squares the old scenes of confusion soon repeated themselves and multiplied, until, in Siborne's words, "the greater portion of the interior slope occupied by the Allied right wing seemed covered with horsemen of all kinds—cuirassiers, lancers, carbineers, chasseurs, dragoons, and horse-grenadiers. . . . At length the attack evinced symptoms of exhaustion; the charges became less frequent and less vigorous; disorder and confusion were rapidly augmenting; the spirit of enthusiasm and the confidence of superiority were quickly yielding to the feeling of despondency and the sense of hopelessness. The Anglo-Allied cavalry again advanced, and once more swept away the mingled host, comprising every description of mounted troops, from off the ground on which they had so fruitlessly frittered away their strength."

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Thus ended the charges of that magnificent cavalry which were expected to sweep from the field the insignificant-looking cluster of infantry squares that constituted Wellington's right wing. The sole result of the operation to Napoleon—apart from the loss of two valuable hours, during which the Prussians were constantly drawing near—was such a wholesale destruction of his superb cavalry force as left it incapable of any great effort during the remainder of the day. It—or rather the cavalry and the artillery combined—had inflicted severe losses upon the Allied force, both foot and horse, who had withstood it; but their loss was by no means comparable to its own; and the Anglo-Allies

were fulfilling their duty if only they held their ground until the coming of the Prussians.¹⁹⁴

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¹⁹⁴ Thiers' story of these charges—of which the substance has been given in notes 187, page 285; and 189, page 290; and 190, page 293—is the expansion of Napoleon's self-exculpatory assertion that Ney, "yielding to the impulses of a reckless valour," destroyed the cavalry, employing them in defiance of the Emperor's wishes, and thereby lost the battle. The primary impression created by Thiers' narrative is one of wonder at the laxity of discipline and wilfulness among the officers of the Grand Army. Milhaud, he tells us, when bidding an impressive and Frenchadieu to Lefebvre-Desnouettes, says, "I am going to charge: support me,"—whereupon the commander of the light cavalry of the Guard takes his whole corps into action without orders. Kellermann, next, is ordered by Napoleon to put his corps at Ney's disposal, but, disapproving Ney's use of cavalry, withholds one of his brigades, and resists when called upon for it. Guyot's corps is now the last of the heavy cavalry remaining: its officers, watching the fight, become excited, cry out, "rush" about, excite their men, especially one squadron which charges of its own accord, and the whole corps straightway follow, though Napoleon sends vainly to call it back. If all this is true, it was the bad discipline of the Grand Army, rather than Ney's reckless valour, that destroyed the cavalry. Chesney, commenting on Napoleon's original excuse and Thiers' elaboration of it, says: "It is a melancholy instance of the perversion of history to suit

national fancy, that would represent such a chief as Napoleon, sitting in the midst of a great action, fought on a narrow space, surrounded by an ample staff, and served by officers of unequalled experience, and yet unable to restrain his lieutenants from uselessly sacrificing his troops at the wrong seasons. . . Col. Heymès has fully explained the particulars of the cavalry attack, which was in great part not ordered by Ney, but undertaken by the reserves of that arm, who vainly imagined the British centre in retreat. From his account we need only quote the simple words (which no evidence has ever touched), 'But this movement was executed under the eyes of the Emperor; he might have stopped it; he did not do so,' to show on whom the real responsibility lies." = Kennedy, commenting upon the same point, brings into view the manner in which Napoleon allowed the battle to take care of itself (see note 148, page 236). "On the field of battle," he says, "Wellington's execution greatly surpassed that of Napoleon. Wherever there was a turning-point in the battle, there Wellington directed in person, judging for himself, and met the storm. Napoleon, on the contrary, sluggishly kept almost to one spot, and acted on the information of others: for example, he says that he disapproved of the great cavalry attack as a premature movement. Why, then, when he saw Milhaud's whole corps of cavalry begin to move across the Charleroi road, immediately in front of where he stood, and directly under his view, did he

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There was not, after the repulse of the cavalry charges, any such intermission of attacks as had divided the previous phases of the battle. On the contrary, the assaults upon the right wing of the Anglo-Allies were continuous; but their character and purpose were different, and they belong to the next stage of the action.

During this third period of the battle the Prussians had entered upon their attack on the French right flank. Bülow, long delayed by the difficulties of the march from Wavre and the nearly impossible passage of the valley of the Lasne, had succeeded in establishing 2 brigades of his corps—Losthin's 15th and Hiller's 16th brigades,—together with his reserve cavalry and artillery, in the Wood of Paris, just at the time when the French cavalry charges were beginning.¹⁹⁵ This force was not sufficient to effect great results, and there was serious risk in exposing it, unsupported, to the much greater strength the French might direct against it; but Blücher's characteristic impatience to be in the fray, seconded by Wellington's repeated appeals for his aid and by what he could

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not gallop forth with his staff and stop the movement? It was an isolated movement, so that he had at that moment nothing else calling for his immediate attention." Kennedy wrote thus in 1858—before Thiers had put forth his story that Ney used the cavalry without Napoleon's knowledge. At the time of Milhaud's first charge, Thiers says, "Napoleon had been obliged to leave his post in the centre and betake himself to the right to direct the action against the Prussians, who thus deprived us not only of our reserves, but of Napoleon's presence."

Here, then, we have Thiers' motive for that artful dislocation of the real order of events which has already been pointed out in note 182, page 277. In order to shift the blame of the cavalry charges upon Ney, by proving an *alibi* for Napoleon, he alleges the following sequence—1st, the attack by the Prussians; 2d, the capture of La Haye Sainte; 3d, the cavalry charges. In fact, the cavalry charges were well advanced before the Prussians entered the field, and were commenced two hours before La Haye Sainte was taken.

¹⁹⁵ See page 157.

himself see of the tremendous pressure brought upon his allies, induced him to wait no longer for reinforcements, but to venture an advance that should at least have the effect of making a diversion in favour of the British.¹⁹⁶ Sending back messengers to hasten the advance of the troops in the rear—

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¹⁹⁶ Thiers finds it natural to assume that Blücher was actuated by extremely contemptible sentiments. "Although he had no objection," he says, "to let the English suffer something in punishment of what he considered the tardy aid they had given him at Ligny, he still would not injure the common cause by the indulgence of any feeling of mean resentment." The unparalleled ardour which the old man had shown in every incident of the campaign renders Victor Hugo's story far more probable—"Blücher, seeing Wellington's danger, ordered Bülow to attack, and employed the memorable phrase, 'We must let the English army breathe!'" The idea prevalent among the English at the time, that the Prussians only came up in time to witness the consummation of a victory already gained by British arms, gives colouring to Scott's first version of their advance, in *Paul's Letters*. The Prussians began, he says, "with no great energy, as the Prussian general waited the coming up of the main body of Blücher's army. . . Besides, the effects of the battle of Ligny were still felt, and it was not only natural but proper that Blücher . . . should take some time to ascertain whether the English were able to maintain their ground until he should come up to their assistance. . . . Such, at least, is the opinion of our best and most

judicious officers. But the loyalty of the Prince-Marshal's character did not permit him long to hesitate upon advancing to the support of his illustrious ally." The disposition to exclude the Prussians from their share in the triumph of Waterloo was not merely a momentary one, pardonable on the score of incomplete information: as late as 1827 Scott incorporated in his *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, without correction, this statement of Pringle's—"The loss of the Prussians on the 18th did not exceed 800 men. The brunt of the action was chiefly sustained by the troops of the British and King's German Legion, as their loss will show." The loss of the Prussians at Waterloo, in fact, was 6,798, in addition to which Thielmann lost 2,467 at Wavre—a total Prussian loss of 9,265, against 6,936 of British troops. These figures are official, being Siborne's. Yet so recent and respectable a writer as Hooper, comparing the British and Prussian losses for the express purpose of determining their relative share in the day's glory, has recourse to the expedient of excluding the numbers that fell at Wavre, and thereby exalts his countrymen at the expense of their allies. = For the number of the Prussian troops at their first entrance on the field, and at subsequent hours, see page 194.

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Hacke's 13th and Ryssel's 14th brigades of Bülow's corps, and, as was supposed, the entire 2d corps of Pirch,—Blücher gave the order to advance, and his scanty troops debouched from the wood.¹⁹⁷ The advance was made in a direction perpendicular to the French right flank and to the Charleroi road, which formed the French main line of operation. Losthin's brigade moved forward on the right, Hiller's on the left: covering the right flank, 3 battalions were detached to Frischermont and Smohain: on the left flank, in like manner, 2 battalions were pushed out toward the stream of the Lasne; and beyond it 100 horsemen were engaged in scouring the country which the French had omitted to occupy. The nearest French troops in Blücher's front, though at some distance, were Domont's cavalry, which had remained idly drawn up in this position since the first alarm of the Prussians' approach.¹⁹⁸ Upon these Blücher now opened a cannonade, intended rather to announce his coming to his allies and draw the attention of the French to his advance, than to greatly affect the enemy before him. Domont hereupon sent forward a regiment of horse-chasseurs, following with his whole line; and 2 Prussian cavalry regiments, supported by a third, drove back the chasseurs, until forced to retreat in turn by the greater numbers of the French, which they effected under cover of two of their batteries. These and the advance of Bülow's infantry checked Domont's

¹⁹⁷ Charras fixes the beginning of the Prussian attack at 4.30. "Napoleon and the French writers in general," he says, "place Bülow's attack at 4 o'clock. It commenced at 4.30—so say the Prussian bulletin and Bülow's report, so say also Müffling and the Prussian and

Dutch historians; and the English historians—which is decisive—are in accord with all this testimony, despite their envious desire to reduce as much as possible the share of the Prussians in the battle."

¹⁹⁸ See page 234.

attack.=By this time the 3 battalions on the right had reached Smohain, where they appeared to the surprise both of the Allied troops who held the ham-
 lets and of Durutte's force on the French extreme right. These soon advanced in such strength as to compel the Prussians to draw back, but they held the hedges in advance of the villages and exchanged a brisk musketry fire with the enemy.=Napoleon had at once responded to Blücher's advance by sending Lobau, with his 6th infantry corps, to join Domont in checking it. Lobau passed before the cavalry, which was now disposed in support, and took up a position against the new comers. The tract of ground upon which he faced them consisted of an elevated tongue of land or promontory included by the streams of the Smohain and the Lasne; and it was across this that he drew up his troops, his left joining Durutte's division near Papelotte, and his right extending to the Hanotelet farm near the road to Planchenoit, that runs beside the Lasne. This disposition was effected rapidly and in good order; and Blücher, with a corresponding front and with the reserve cavalry under Prince William of Prussia in support of his left wing, moved up the slope of the promontory and upon the French, who directed upon him a brisk cannonade that soon disabled three of the Prussian guns. At the outset the Prussians were inferior in numbers to Lobau, who, says Thiers, "received them with a fusillade which, though it did great mischief in their ranks, did not arrest their advance. These returned the fire to the best of their ability, and their projectiles, falling behind us into the midst of our parks and baggage, caused some confusion on the Charleroi road. Lobau's practised eye saw that they were not supported, and seizing the opportunity [he] sent forward his first line, and a charge with fixed bayonets

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drove the assailants back into the thickets they had left." At this juncture, however, Bülow's two remaining brigades came up, and gave him the superiority of force. Blücher was now able not only to meet Lobau along his whole position with a line stronger than his own, but to detach on his right 2 more battalions which should support those already advanced to Frischermont and Smohain and secure the communication with Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, whose brigade was in front of the extreme Anglo-Allied left; and this flank was also given the support of 2 cavalry regiments: on their left the Prussians still more seriously outflanked the French, and the cavalry of Prince William were on the road to Planchenoit—which was in the rear both of Lobau and of Napoleon—with no enemy to oppose them.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ The order of the Prussian advance was this:—

			14th brigade Ryssel	
	Cavalry	15th brigade Losthin	13th brigade Hacke	16th brigade Hiller
Frischermont *			BÜLOW	Cavalry
Smohain *			LOBAU	
Papelotte *		Jeannin	Simmer	
		Subervie	Domont	* Planchenoit

The Prussian force consisted of the whole of Bülow's (4th) corps, about 29,000 strong, of all arms. Lobau commanded 2 divisions of his own (6th) corps, about 7,500 strong (his remaining division being with Grouchy), and the 2 cavalry divisions

of Domont and Subervie, 3,100 strong, and he had some batteries from the Imperial Guard, his own 12-pounder battery having been among those destroyed by the charge of the Scots Greys. These forces were distributed as follows:—

	LOBAU	BÜLOW	
		Opposing Lobau	At Frischermont, &c.
Battalions, 16		30	6
Squadrons, 18		27	8
Guns, 42		64	—
			Total
			36
			35
			64

Bülow's guns were divided among 2 batteries of 12-pounders, 4 of 6-pounders, and 2 horse-batteries.

Planchenoit up to this time had been occupied by the French; and, both on this account and because his right flank was on the point of being turned, Lobau had no choice but to fall back in the direction of the Charleroi road. Napoleon, alive to the gravity of the danger of having his flank thus turned by a force already so considerable and likely to be increased, hastened to occupy Planchenoit in force and support Lobau. He therefore sent the troops nearest at hand, the 2 divisions of the Young Guard—4 battalions of voltigeurs, 4 of tirailleurs,—with 24 guns, instructing Gen. Duhesme, their commander, to place himself on the right of Lobau's corps. = It was at this moment, when he was so pressed for troops that he had been driven to the measure he especially detested—that of drawing upon his Guard, and to the extent of one-third of its entire strength,—that Napoleon received a message from Ney, now organising the new attack upon Wellington's centre, calling for fresh infantry. The Emperor's famous reply indicated the frame of mind to which the condition of the battle had brought him—" *Où voulez-vous que j'en prenne? Voulez-vous que j'en fasse?* "

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At this period of the battle—at the close of his third great attack—Napoleon had gained no single advantage over his enemy. The third attack in particular had been disastrous to him, for it had wrecked his noble cavalry force and destroyed a large proportion of it. To quote Kennedy's military criticism, "This third attack, made by the whole of his magnificent force of heavy cavalry, was an error of surpassing magnitude on the part of Napoleon, because, first, it was a merely isolated attack; second, it was made by cavalry alone; third, it was made on a portion of the Anglo-Allied army which had not before been attacked at all, and consequently not in the least degree broken or exhausted; and,

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fourth, it was a premature period of the action at which to attempt to decide the battle by a mere charge of cavalry. No part of Wellington's line of battle was at that period of the action either so exhausted or so shaken as to warrant the supposition that his order of battle could be overthrown by cavalry alone." The six hours which Napoleon had lost, and the omission to oppose resistance while there was yet time, had allowed the overlooked Prussians to come upon his flank and almost into his rear and upon his line of retreat. Already he was greatly outnumbered, and he had every reason to expect the inequality to increase.

*IV. Attacks upon the Allied Right and Centre :
La Haye Sainte taken.*

- IV. Napoleon and Ney had both become convinced of the failure of the attempt to break the Allied line by means of cavalry alone, and, even before the repulse of the fourth great cavalry charge, both were absorbed in other operations. Napoleon's attention was engrossed—and, for the time, to the exclusion of all other things—by the imminent danger from Blücher's impending attack on his right and rear. To meet and overcome this was his immediate task, and until it should be accomplished he postponed, or at least subordinated, the continuation of the unproductive contest along Wellington's line. Ney, on the contrary—seeing nothing, and perhaps knowing as little, of the Prussians,—was intent upon achieving victory in his own part of the field. Turning away from the ineffectual cavalry charges, he proceeded to organise a new assault upon La Haye Sainte, as a preliminary to new attacks from that outpost by which he hoped to break Wellington's centre and overthrow his right wing.

The Allied right, however, continued to undergo a series of attacks—partial and disconnected, but none the less severe—during the period of Ney's preparations. No sooner had the French cavalry been driven from the plateau than their batteries again reopened their furious cannonade. Many of the Allied guns had by this time become disabled ; and while some of their batteries had from time to time been withdrawn to refit, others, which had been in the rear or in the second line, were brought forward to replace them along the main ridge. One of these renovated batteries, Major Bull's, returned to the position in left-rear of Hougomont whence it had originally been dislodged by Piré's fire from the extreme French left,²⁰⁰ and renewed the contest with its old enemy so effectively that it presently silenced his guns for the remainder of the day—a most important service to all the Allied troops and artillerymen in that part of the field, since Piré's battery had for a long time enfiladed their right flank. Farther to the right, Cooke's division of Guards and the Brunswick troops held an exposed position where the French guns played upon them with terrible severity ; and the French cavalry were evidently preparing to attack them, when they were relieved by the opportune arrival of artillery reinforcements—Mercer's British horse-battery, which posted itself before the Brunswick squares,²⁰¹ and Sympher's horse-battery of the King's German Legion,

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²⁰⁰ See page 228.

²⁰¹ Mercer's *Journal of the Waterloo Campaign* describes his troop at this moment as coming up at a gallop from its previous position on the west of the Nivelles road, the troop flying over the ground as compactly as if at a review. The Duke of Wellington, who was at the endangered point, said of their approach,

"That's the way I like to see horse-artillery move"—the second occasion on which the Duke's admiration for this battery had been extorted from him (note 11, page 19). Mercer says of the fire into which he now advanced : "So thick was the hail of balls and bullets that it seemed dangerous to extend the arm lest it should be torn off."

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which was drawn up on Mercer's left, nearer the Guards. Mercer's guns—six 9-pounders—were partially sheltered behind a low bank some three feet high, on which a narrow cross-road descended a steep part of the ridge in rear of Hougomont, the muzzles of the guns being nearly on a level with the road. Just as they were made ready for action, a heavy column of French cuirassiers and horse-grenadiers rode rapidly up the ridge directly upon the battery: they had almost reached it when it opened on them so destructive a fire that the column recoiled; its leading squadrons faced about and struggled toward the rear; the advancing and retiring horsemen mingled into a stationary mob; and into this helpless mass the battery poured an incessant and wonderfully rapid fire that produced frightful carnage. In their frantic struggles to escape from this dreadful situation the French came to blows with one another; some dashed in between the intervals of the guns and surrendered; others were carried away by wounded horses, to perish among the squares; and the most fortunate, a mere wreck of their former force, sought shelter under the slope, leaving upon it heaps of bodies of men and horses. = On the left of Mercer's battery, nearly at the time these cavalry were repulsed, the central portion of the right wing was attacked by that infantry column from Bachelu's division which Ney had set in motion when he was himself preparing to assail La Haye Sainte,²⁰² and the column was supported by cavalry. To relieve the threatened squares, now greatly reduced in numbers, Lord Uxbridge ordered a charge by the remains of Somerset's Household Brigade; but he saw these had become too few to make a serious impression upon the heavy column, and he ordered up

²⁰² See page 296.

in their support Trip's still intact brigade of Dutch-Belgian carbineers, 1,300 strong. Somerset had charged and momentarily checked the column, but had not strength sufficient to penetrate it, and was in the act of retiring from its fire, when Lord Uxbridge put himself at the head of the Dutch-Belgians, sounded the "charge," and rode forward to attack. He had not gone far when his aide-de-camp, Capt. Seymour, galloping after, overtook him with the intelligence that not a man was following him. Turning his horse he rode up to Trip and addressed him in terms adapted to the occasion—"cavalry forms of speech," as they have since been called,—and, when these had no effect, appealed directly to the ranks, exhorting the men by voice and gesture, again sounding the "charge," and again leading the way. But the Dutch-Belgians were not to be moved until the approach of the French cavalry, who had witnessed their hesitation, and were now coming upon them: then they instantly went about, and, completely disordering 2 squadrons of Arentsschildt's 3d hussars of the King's German Legion who obstructed their way, fled the field, and were no more seen in the fight. The 3d hussars had just formed to charge, in the rear of Kruse's Nassau squares; and the single squadron which had not been upset by the fugitives now charged gallantly and overthrew those of the cuirassiers whom they encountered. By this time the 2 right-hand squadrons had recovered their order, and Lord Uxbridge led the entire regiment to the brow of the heights, whence they charged a line of 3 squadrons of French cuirassiers and 3 of heavy dragoons. The French were some 150 yards down the slope, and the speed which the hussars gathered in the descent carried them triumphantly through the line, which was moving at a very slow pace; but the enemy's numbers closed

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in upon them, hemming them in on flanks and rear, and so many were cut off that, of the whole regiment, there survived from the French pursuit, to rally behind the infantry squares, only between 60 and 70 files, which were formed into 2 squadrons and posted in rear of Kielmansegge's Hanoverian infantry.=Still more to the left, beside the Charleroi road, the destruction in the Allied troops had been so great that there was now a serious gap in their line, and to fill this—or at least that it should appear to the enemy to be filled,—Uxbridge ordered forward the Cumberland regiment of Hanoverian hussars. The conduct of Trip's Dutch-Belgians, together with the bearing of the commander of these Hanoverians, had inspired Lord Uxbridge with fears that they too might prove untrustworthy. "That he had reason to apprehend something of this kind was subsequently proved, for Col. Hake, on finding the shot flying about him a little, took himself and his regiment out of the field; on discovering which Lord Uxbridge despatched his aide-de-camp, Capt. Horace Seymour, with an order for his return. When Capt. Seymour delivered this order the Colonel remarked that he had no confidence in his men, that they were volunteers, and that their horses were their own property. The regiment continued moving to the rear, notwithstanding Capt. Seymour's repeating the order to halt and asking the second in command to save the honour and character of the corps by placing himself at its head and fronting the men. Finding his remonstrances produced no effect, he laid hold of the bridle of the Colonel's horse, and commented upon his conduct in terms such as no man of honour could have been expected to listen to unmoved. This officer, however, appeared perfectly callous to any sense of shame, and far more disposed to submit to these attacks upon his honour than he had

been to receive those of the enemy upon his person and his regiment. Upon rejoining the Earl of Uxbridge and relating what had passed, Capt. Seymour was again directed to proceed to the commanding officer and to desire that if he persevered in refusing to resume his position in the line, he would at least form the regiment across the highroad, *out of fire*. But even this order was disregarded, and the corps went altogether to the rear, spreading alarm and confusion all the way to Brussels.”²⁰³—On the right of the line, during these several conflicts, that column of horse-grenadiers and cuirassiers which Mercer’s battery had repulsed was re-forming, and bent on avenging itself upon the artillerymen. The gunners were ready for them, since the

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²⁰³ This somewhat prolix story of the Cumberland hussars is Siborne’s. Gleig says of their progress among the fugitives who had preceded them on the way to Brussels, that they “came galloping down the great avenue and shouting that the French were at their heels. No mercy was shown by these cowards to the helpless and prostrate who came in their way. They rode over such as lacked time or strength to escape from them, and cut at the drivers of wagons who either did not or could not draw aside out of their way.” Scott, in *Paul’s Letters*, mentions a mitigating circumstance:—“I have been told many of the officers and soldiers of this unlucky regiment left it in shame, joined themselves to other bodies of cavalry, and behaved well in the action.” As to Col. Hake—or Rulle, as Gleig calls him (he is in any case to be distinguished from Gen. Hacke, who commanded the 13th Prussian brigade in Bülow’s corps)—it is satis-

factory to know that he was subsequently tried by court-martial and dismissed the service.—Incidents of this kind were of course calculated to awaken the Duke of Wellington’s indignation; but they do not justify his designating the aggregate force that fought under him as “a villainous army.” His niggardly bestowal of praise and his refusal to affix merited blame seem to show his lack of any idea of justice. “I confess,” he wrote to the Duke of York, on September 12, 1815, “that I feel very strong objections to discuss before a general court-martial the conduct of any individual in such a battle as that of Waterloo. It generally brings before the public circumstances which might as well not be published: and the effect is equally produced by obliging him who has behaved ill to withdraw from the service.” So the Duke averaged the conduct of the cowards and of the heroes—except of those whom he personally favoured.

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high caps of the grenadiers showed above the brow of the slope and disclosed their movements: so, when a number of skirmishers ascended in advance, rode about the battery, and harassed the artillerymen with their carbines and pistols, the English reserved their fire for the charge of the main body. These presently moved upward, more slowly than before, because of the obstacles that encumbered the face of the slope, and approached the guns, which were rammed with case on top of round shot. The gunners waited until the leading squadrons were almost upon them: then, with only rare exceptions, the front rank of the horsemen was absolutely blown away, and the solid shot crashed through the depth of the column: the same hideous scene took place as on the former charge; and again for several minutes the guns played upon a tumultuous rabble only 20 yards distant, until the ground was literally piled with the dead.²⁰⁴ At this juncture, Allied infantry from the second line was brought forward into the first under the direction of Wellington in person, and in this part of the field the position was made secure.

²⁰⁴ The havoc made by this battery during these two attacks was such that Sir Augustus Frazer, commander of the horse-artillery, told Mercer—who records it in his *Journal*—that he “could plainly distinguish the position of G troop from the opposite [French] height by the dark mass which, even from that distance, formed a remarkable feature in the field.” Mercer’s battery, however, paid severely for the distinguished service it had rendered. A French battery on the western extremity of the central elevation opened upon his guns, raking them from left to right, until his troop was reduced to a wreck—140 horses being

destroyed out of his 200, every one of which Blücher had declared to be “good enough for a Field-Marshal,” and of the men only enough remained to work 3 guns. Mercer, it should be added, received no recognition from Wellington for his exploit: the troop which he commanded belonged to another captain, who was not with it during this campaign, but resumed it afterwards; and though Sir George Wood, commander of the artillery, procured him the command of a troop, he was deprived of it. Mercer lived to be a general, commanding a brigade; but he owed no thanks for it to the Duke of Wellington.

Ney's attack upon La Haye Sainte was made while these various conflicts were taking place along the right wing. The garrison of the farm was strong enough, perhaps, so far as numbers were concerned, and the men were resolute, willing to fight determinedly; but Baring's repeated requisitions for ammunition were still disregarded, and upon counting the cartridges it appeared that there was only an average of four to each man.²⁰⁵ The attack by the French infantry was as usual preceded by a tremendous cannonade, directed in

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²⁰⁵ The force under Baring's command at the time of the final assault on La Haye Sainte cannot be stated precisely. He had originally his own battalion of the King's German Legion, 400 strong, which had been reinforced at different times by 3 companies of the Legion and 2 of Nassau troops; but the losses in the previous attacks had been severe, and the garrison probably numbered now not more than 500. But the Germans were eager for the fight. At the close of the previous attack, after the burning barn had been extinguished, the officers directed those who had been hurt to retire to the main line, while communication was open; but the men replied, "So long as our officers fight and we can stand, we will not leave the spot." One man, Frederick Lindau by name, had taken a large bag of gold from a French officer, and had received two severe wounds in the head while defending the entrance to the barn: Baring personally desired him to withdraw, and was answered, "None but a scoundrel would desert you, while his head remains on his shoulders:" so he stayed, was taken prisoner, and lost his gold. = But the abominable negligence about the

ammunition supply neutralised all the heroism of the defenders. Two excuses were made—that communication was cut off between the post and the main line, and that the need was for rifle ammunition. As to the former, communication existed often enough to allow frequent reinforcements and was several times quite uninterrupted: as to the latter, 2 out of the 4 battalions of Ompteda's brigade, close by, were armed with rifles, as was Kempt's 95th regiment directly across the Charleroi road. Kennedy, after saying that "this matter had certainly been grossly mismanaged," continues: "Baring could not account for it, which I know from our having slept together on the ground close to the Wellington Tree on the night after the action, when he mentioned his having sent more than once for a supply of ammunition and his having received no answer. The unexplained want of ammunition by Baring's battalion is placed in an extraordinary view when it is considered that the battle of Waterloo lasted eight hours and a half, and that all the three brigades of the division got the ammunition they required with the exception of this one battalion."

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this case against the portion of the Allied line immediately in rear of La Haye Sainte and sweeping the ground over which succour might pass to the defenders—the fire telling with terrible severity upon the already scanty remains of Ompteda's squares and Somerset's and Ponsonby's squadrons in their rear.²⁰⁶ Covered by this fire, a column of Donzelot's division, led by Ney himself, moved forward; their advance was checked by a flight of rockets discharged by Whinyates' rocket-battery along the Charleroi road, every one of which told; but this seemed only to increase their fury, and when the rockets were expended they dashed on to the old attack, and especially upon the opening in the barn. Again they set the barn on fire, and again the Germans extinguished the flames, using the kettles as before, and suffering much from the French musket fire. The Germans husbanded their few cartridges to the utmost, but they were nearly spent, and the fire of the garrison was dwindling into insignificance. Baring had sent again—for the fourth time—for ammunition, saying that, unless it was forthcoming, he must and would abandon the post; the men, left unable to retaliate, lost spirit, but professed their readiness to fight on if they had but the means; even the officers, who had all day been as ardent as Baring himself, now represented to him the uselessness of trying longer to hold the buildings; and the French, discovering the condition of the defenders, made a desperate assault. They broke in the western

²⁰⁶ The two heavy cavalry brigades were extended in single file to make their force appear as strong as possible to the enemy, and they consequently suffered much from the artillery. "On perceiving its effects," says Siborne, "Lord Uxbridge sent an aide-de-camp to recommend Lord

Edward Somerset to withdraw his men from the range of the enemy's guns. The latter sent back word that, were he to do so, the Dutch-Belgian cavalry, who were in support, would immediately move off the field! Somerset retained his position until the end of the battle."

door of the building next the barn, and sought to press through into the yard; but the Germans met them with the bayonet within the building, and held them back. Stopped at this point, parties scaled the outer wall and climbed from it upon the roofs, whence they picked off the Germans in the yard below, who could no longer fire back, and were thus at their mercy. Resistance at the great entrance of the barn was thus made impossible, and here the French swarmed in, massacring those whom they could reach. Baring had ordered his men to retire through the dwelling-house into the garden, and an attempt was made to hold the narrow passage through the house; but the French, firing down the passage, rendered it a mere death-trap to those within. The dwelling once in the enemy's hands, the garden became untenable; the officers directed the men to retire singly and as they best could to the main position; and the survivors, passing, for the most part, from the garden to the opposite side of the Charleroi road, sought their respective regiments.²⁰⁷ Thus Ney, after the

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²⁰⁷ The hour at which La Haye Sainte was taken has been much disputed. Hooper says about it, "Major Baring, it is but just to say, contends that he did not quit the farm until after 6 o'clock. Captain Siborne has adopted the same view. But we cannot accept this version. The Duke of Wellington said that La Haye Sainte was taken about 2, Napoleon at 3, and other writers later. Charras, on the authority of an officer present, fixes the period of the capture at a little before 4; it was probably taken a little after. The grand cavalry attacks may have been begun a little before the farmstead was cleared, but it is very doubtful."

Hooper wrote thus before the publication of the *Notes* by Kennedy, who was an observant spectator of what passed at La Haye Sainte, who closely noted the sequence of events, and who shows that Ney made his push for the farm *after* he had been convinced of the inutility of the cavalry attacks. Siborne's date is undoubtedly correct. = The horrible butchery that followed the taking of La Haye Sainte is not concealed by the French writers. Thiers says of Ney's attack: "This illustrious Marshal certainly needed no stimulus, for his peerless bravery seemed on this day to surpass the capabilities of mere man. . . . Excited by this example, the soldiers forced the

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failure of repeated and persistent attacks, had achieved the conquest of La Haye Sainte—the first advantage of

door of the farm-house, entered under a fearful fusillade, and massacred the battalion of German light infantry that was defending it. Of 500 men only 40 with 5 officers escaped." Thiers, as usual, knows little of the actual circumstances. Siborne accounts for all the officers, giving their names. There were 27 in all, of whom 5 were killed, 10 wounded, 2 taken prisoners, and 10 escaped unhurt. = The Erckmann-Chatrian conscript was in this attacking column, and describes its adventures graphically. A column of Donzelot's division was prepared, he says, and Ney came up to them. "The Marshal then rode along the front of our 2 battalions with his sword drawn. I had never seen him so near since the grand review at Aschaffembourg. He seemed older, thinner, and more bony, but still the same man; he looked at us with his sharp grey eyes, as if he took us all in at a glance, and each one felt as if he were looking directly at him. At the end of a second he pointed toward Haye Sainte with his sword, and exclaimed, 'We are going to take that; you will have the whole at once; it is the turning-point of the battle. I am going to lead you myself. Battalions, by file to the left!' We started at a quick step on the road, marching by companies in three ranks. I was in the second. Marshal Ney was in front, on horseback. . . . As we approached the buildings the report of the musketry became more distinct from the roar of the cannon, and we could better see the flash of guns from the win-

dows, and the great black roof above in the smoke, and the road blocked up with stones. We went along by a hedge, behind which crackled the fire of our skirmishers, for the first brigade of Alix's division had not quitted the orchards, and on seeing us filing along the road they commenced to shout '*Vive l'Empereur.*' = He [Ney] disappeared in the smoke with two or three officers, and we all started on a run, our cartridge-boxes dangling about our hips, and our muskets at the 'ready.' Far to the rear they were beating the charge. We did not see the Marshal again till we reached a shed which separated the garden from the road, when we discovered him on horseback before the main entrance. It appeared that they had already tried to force the door, as there was a heap of dead men, timbers, paving stones, and rubbish piled up before it, reaching to the middle of the road. The shot poured from every opening in the building, and the air was heavy with the smell of powder. 'Break that in!' shouted the Marshal. Fifteen or twenty of us dropped our muskets, and, seizing beams, we drove them against the door with such force that it cracked and echoed back to the blows like thunder. You would have thought it would drop at every stroke. We could see through the planks the paving-stones heaped as high as the top inside. It was full of holes, and when it fell it might have crushed us, but fury had rendered us blind to danger. We no longer had any resemblance to men; some had lost their shakos, others had

the day gained by the French. At last he was within striking distance of the hitherto invulnerable enemy ;

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their clothes nearly torn off; the blood ran from their fingers and down their sides, and at every discharge of musketry the shot from the hill struck the paving-stones, pounding them to dust around us. . . . Our rage redoubled, and as the timbers went back and forth we grew furious to find that the door would not come down, when suddenly we heard shouts of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' from the court, accompanied by a most horrible uproar. Every one knew that our troops had gained an entrance into the enclosure. We dropped the timbers, and seizing our guns we sprang through the breaches into the garden to find where the others had entered. It was in the rear of the house, through a door opening into the barn. We rushed through, one after the other, like a pack of wolves. The interior of this old structure, with its lofts full of hay and straw, and its stables covered with thatch, looked like a bloody nest which had been attacked by a sparrow-hawk. On a great dung-heap in the middle of the court our men were bayoneting the Germans, who were yelling and swearing savagely." The conscript dwells on the massacre, and the troubles in which he and some comrades involved themselves by taking prisoners instead of killing; but the story is too long for quotation. = Siborne, in a note, gives the following details of the escape of the German officers and the barbarity of the victors:—"The passage through the farmhouse to the garden in the rear was narrow, and here the officers en-

deavoured to halt the men and make one more charge, but as the French had already commenced firing down the passage, this was found impracticable. Ensign Frank, on perceiving a French soldier levelling his musket at Lieut. Græme, called out to the latter to take care; but, as he was still trying to rally his men, he replied, 'Never mind: let the rascal fire.' At this instant the piece was levelled, but it fell to the ground with its owner, whom Ensign Frank had stabbed in time to save his friend. The French were now rushing into the house, and the foremost of them having fired at Ensign Frank, his arm was shattered by the bullet. Nevertheless he contrived to obtain shelter in a bed-chamber, and succeeded in concealing himself under the bed. Two of the men also took refuge in the same room, but the French followed close at their heels, crying, '*Pas de pardon à ces coquins verds!*' and shot them close to Ensign Frank, who had the well-merited good fortune of remaining undiscovered until the house again fell into the hands of the Allies. Lieut. Græme, who had continued in the passage, was suddenly seized by the collar by a French officer, who exclaimed to his men, '*C'est ce coquin!*' Their bayonets were immediately thrust at him, but he managed to parry them with his sword, and, as the officer for a moment relinquished his grasp, Græme darted along the passage, the French firing two shots after him and calling out '*Coquin!*' but they did not follow him, and he succeeded in rejoining the remnant of his battalion."

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he could turn against him his own stronghold; with an adequate force he could instantly sweep away anything the Allies had then before him, crush their weakened centre, and overwhelm their attenuated line. Impatient to follow up his advantage, the Marshal sent to the Emperor for infantry reinforcements. But the message reached the Emperor at a moment when he was already irritated by the destruction of his cavalry, and impatient of any interruption to his own absorbing task of dealing with Blücher's unlooked-for onslaught, and, galled by this fresh demand upon his already overtaxed resources, he pettishly retorted upon Col. Heymès with the bitter inquiry whether he was expected to "make" infantry.²⁰⁸ Ney's indomitable resolution was proof against even this rebuff: his master's refusal to give him troops from the reserves forbade his making the formidable attack by columns in mass of battalions, which he had purposed launching from La Haye Sainte upon the exhausted troops immediately before him; but he could still collect from the well-worn corps of Reille and D'Erlon a certain amount of force with which to essay a system of assault in which the French soldiery were adepts—the "grand attack *en tirailleurs*." He now set himself to organise from whatever troops he found within reach that succession of attacks which thenceforth went on continu-

²⁰⁸ See page 305. = Even Thiers is forced to admit how fatally ill-judged was this refusal of Napoleon's: he says: "Certainly had he himself seen the state of the British army described by Ney, and had not the danger on his right increased, Lobau's corps alone would have sufficed to keep Bülow in check; and Napoleon might have led the infantry of the Guard against the English, and completed their destruction, and then returned to oppose the

Prussians with what indeed would be only the remnant of his troops, but troops flushed with victory. But he distrusted Ney's judgment, he could not forgive his precipitation, and he could see the entire Prussian army emerging from that yawning abyss which was continually pouring forth fresh masses of enemies." Thiers thus accounts, and no doubt correctly, for Napoleon's neglect of his single opportunity on this day to deal his enemy a decisive blow.

ously, and constantly increased in violence, until the battle had been determined elsewhere—attacks which almost assured him the destruction of the Allied centre, if not absolute victory.

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Before Ney's new attacks from La Haye Sainte could be fully developed, the Duke of Wellington, on the right of his line, had opportunity to re-establish that part of his position which had been saved from imminent overthrow by the coming up of the horse-batteries to the front. Though saved for the moment, the state of things in this quarter was still critical—a number of the Allied guns had become disabled by the enemy's fire; the remains of Byng's Guards, who were defending Hougomont, had been driven back into the "hollow-way" on its northern boundary, leaving the orchard to the French infantry, who were mustering there in great numbers; the cannonade had told terribly upon the Brunswick troops; and the supporting cavalry, besides being much diminished, were exhausted by repeated charges. Bodies of French cavalry were now being prepared, at the foot of the slope and along the eastern side of Hougomont, with the apparent design of surrounding its enclosures, so as to cut off communication between the outpost and the main position, and of forcing the right of the line itself. It was at this juncture that the approach of Chassé's Dutch-Belgian division, which Wellington had ordered up from Braine-la-Leude to meet this emergency,²⁰⁹ enabled him to bring into the front the troops hitherto in the second line—Clinton's 2d division, consisting of Du Plat's 1st brigade of the King's German Legion, Adam's 3d British brigade, and Col. Hew Halkett's 3d Hanoverian brigade. Lord Hill—commander of the 2d corps, to which Clinton's

²⁰⁹ See page 294.

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division belonged—led forward Du Plat's brigade from its previous position on the west of the Nivelles road. As its leading battalion drew near the brow of the ridge, some gunners ran in upon it for shelter from pursuing cuirassiers; and the 4 light companies of the brigade, who were armed with rifles and who found partial shelter from a clump of trees, delivered a fire that made the horsemen withdraw, a party of Allied cavalry pursuing. The brigade then advanced until its foremost battalion was near the hedge of the Hougomont orchard, when it became engaged with the French infantry skirmishers. Presently the Allied dragoons who had just charged retreated hurriedly through the intervals of its columns, and the brigade became aware of a fresh body of hostile cavalry on its left-front. Sympher's horse-battery fired upon these through the intervals, and the columns kept up a well-sustained file-fire; but the cuirassiers, advancing resolutely, attacked the battery, the gunners seeking shelter either among the infantry or under the gun-carriages, until Du Plat's musketry fire caused such loss among the horsemen that they retired in disorder, followed as usual by a discharge from the battery. Three battalions of the Brunswickers had followed on the left of the Germans, and aided in resisting the cavalry charge; but when that was over they sought shelter from the renewed fire that followed it, and withdrew to the reverse slope of the heights. The French skirmishers, during the operations of the cavalry, had gathered in great force in the Hougomont orchard and along its eastern boundary, and they now poured a very severe fire upon the Germans. Du Plat himself fell mortally wounded; several other officers fell; all who were mounted had their horses shot under them; and this hot work continued until, with a sudden cessation of the fire, came a renewed cavalry charge, which was

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Upon the new array of squares thus obtruded from the main position into the plain, the French carbineers and horse-grenadiers of the Guard made a succession of gallant charges: advancing along the Hougomont boundary, they were generally thrown into disorder by the fire from the squares of the 71st regiment, and their confusion was completed when they rode into that of the 52d; and they were at last brought to utter discomfiture by a well-combined cross-fire from the rifle company of the 95th, attached to the 71st, together with the musketry from the face of the square of the 71st, both at very short distance.²¹¹ Hew Halkett's Hanoverian brigade had by this time been advanced by Lord Hill to the exterior slope of the main ridge, back of Hougomont and in support of Du Plat's brigade; so that now the main position and Hougomont were so firmly linked together by troops that no pressure of the enemy could endanger that part of the line. The extremely advanced position of Adam's brigade, however, exposed it to a very severe cannonade from the French batteries on the central elevation—the same, probably, that destroyed Mercer's battery; and it was presently withdrawn to the reverse slope of the main position, where on the right of Maitland's Guards it remained ready to advance against any attack in this direction.²¹²

In the hurry of the advance, the 52d was not in line with the other regiments, but in their rear; and, when they formed squares, it moved into the interval between them. From the same cause the 3d battalion of the 95th regiment got into position next the 71st, and remained with it.

²¹¹ "In an instant," says Siborne, "one half of the attacking force was on the ground; some few men and horses were killed; more were

wounded; but by far the greater part were thrown down over the dead, the dying, and the wounded. These, after a short interval, began to extricate themselves from the mass, and made the best of their way back to their supports, some on horseback, but most of them on foot."

²¹² To understand the formation of the brigade when next called upon to meet an attack, it should be remembered that, during this alter-

Nivelles

Road

Piré

Mitchell

Hew Halkett, H

Brunswick

Du Plat, K

Hougomont

JEROME
FOY

French Cavalry
and BACHELU

Adam, E

D'Aubremé, DB

Maitland, E

C. Halkett, E

Ditmar, DB

Grant, E

Dörnberg, E

Arentsschildt, K

Somerset, E
Ponsonby, E

Brunswick

Kruse, N

Kielmanssegge, H

Ompieda, K

DONZEL

La Haye Sainte

FRIANT—
MORAND—

Charleroi

Remains of Anglo-Allied Cavalry.

Mont St. Jean

Vincke, H

Lambert, E
Kempt, E
Pack, E
Best, H

Vandeleur, E
Verian, E

Sand-pit

T ALIX MARCOGNET

Papelotte

DURUTTE

La Haye

PERPONCHER, DB

Smohain

Frischermont

Cavalry

Road

Subervie

Jacquinot

La Belle
Alliance

JEANNIN

LOBAU

SIMMER

Losthin

Hacke

Ryssel

Hiller

BÜLOW

Cavalry

Old Guard
Middle Guard

DUHESNE
(Young Guard)

Demont

Flanch enoit

The attitude which the troops had assumed at the time of Ney's attack from La Haye Sainte is best understood from a diagram.²¹³

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Ney lost little time, after he was established in La Haye Sainte, in setting in motion his renewed attack upon the Allied line. On his left, fresh efforts were made to take Hougomont, and both Bachelu's infantry division and the remains of the cavalry were engaged in those assaults which Wellington had withstood by bringing forward his reserves. On his right, such of

nation of cavalry charges with the cannonade and musketry fire, it had been compelled frequently to form squares and then deploy into line. "The 52d," Kennedy explains, "was at one time in squares of wings, and afterwards, the companies having formed their left behind their right subdivisions, the battalions, by closing the companies, formed a line four deep, and continued in that four-deep formation during the remainder of the action." = To the period just described—when Adam's brigade was meeting the attempt of the French to force the Allied right—should probably be referred Wellington's exclamation to its commander, "By G—, Adam, I think we shall beat them yet!" This incident, subsequently related by Adam to Kennedy, the latter considers "of much historical interest," adding, "From what other source do we know what the Duke's feelings were, up to that period, as to the possible issue of the action?"

²¹³ The diagram in two cases anticipates the point as yet reached by the narrative: (1) a portion of the Brunswick troops were shortly employed to fill a gap in the Allied line between Kruse's and Sir C. Hal-

kett's brigades; (2) Ditmar's and D'Aubremé's Dutch-Belgian brigades (of Chassé's division) were brought up from the west of the Nivelles road into the second line, for a similar purpose. The Dutch-Belgian cavalry are wholly omitted from the diagram, as they did no fighting. Byng's entire brigade of British Guards was by this time drawn into the defence of Hougomont, as was also, shortly afterwards, a part of Du Plat's brigade of the King's German Legion. Brigades of different divisions had now become so intermingled in the Allied line that the names of the corps- and division-commanders are omitted in the diagram. = It is somewhat curious that both Gen. H. W. Halleck, in his translation of Jomini's *Life of Napoleon*, and Capt. S. V. Benet, in that of the same author's *Campaign of 1815*, should state that Wellington, at this time, was "reinforced by the Belgian brigade *de chasse*." Puzzled, evidently, to know what denomination of force this might be, they have been content to leave the French, as they supposed, untranslated. The troops were in fact Gen. Chassé's Dutch-Belgian division.

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D'Erlon's troops as were not otherwise employed—that is, the reorganized divisions of Alix and Marcognet—were pushed forward in skirmishing order against the infantry of the Allied left wing, which was much weakened by its repulse of the first French charge. At La Haye Sainte Ney personally directed the operations by which he hoped to break through the Allied centre. From the farm-house, the garden, and the highroad beside it, such a fire was opened upon the two companies of Kempt's 95th British rifles occupying the sand-pit and knoll on the further side of the Charleroi road, that the riflemen, who were also pressed in front at the same time by Alix's skirmishers, were driven back upon their main body along the Wavre road. The French next proceeded to push two guns through the garden hedge to the bank of the highroad, whence they began to fire grape into Kempt's brigade; but this was very soon ended by the rifles, whose fire destroyed the gunners before they could discharge a second round. = A large body of French infantry at the same time emerged on the left from the cover of the farm, and, spreading into a close line of skirmishers, opened a fire which was concentrated upon the squares of Alten's division, and did great execution among their compact ranks. Alten sent an order to Ompteda to deploy one of his battalions, if practicable, and disperse the enemy; but Ompteda had noticed a body of French cavalry lying in wait in the hollow westward of La Haye Sainte which the tirailleurs for the moment concealed; and, knowing the danger to which the battalion would be exposed if deployed before cavalry, returned an answer, explaining the circumstances. “At this moment of hesitation the Prince of Orange rode up to Ompteda and ordered him to deploy. The latter respectfully submitted the same opinion he had before expressed to Alten's messenger;

whereupon his Royal Highness became impatient, repeated the order, and forbade further reply. Ompteda, with the true spirit of a soldier, instantly deployed the 5th line battalion, placed himself at its head, and gallantly led it against the mass of tirailleurs who had continued to crowd forward, and under whose teasing fire the Germans displayed the greatest steadiness and bravery. The French gave way as the line advanced at the charge, and as it approached the garden of La Haye Sainte they suddenly and rapidly sought shelter along the hedges. In the next moment the battalion was furiously assailed by a regiment of cuirassiers, who, taking the line in its right flank, fairly rolled it up. This cavalry charge, preconcerted with great skill, and executed with amazing rapidity, proved awfully destructive to the courageous but unfortunate Germans, and fully and fatally confirmed the truth of the unheeded prediction of their intrepid commander. So severe was the loss sustained that out of the whole battalion not more than 30 men with a few officers were gradually collected in the hollow-way that lay along the front of the left of the brigade. Amongst the slain was Ompteda himself, who, with his followers, thus fell a sacrifice to the absence of that precaution, the necessity for which he had vainly endeavoured to impress upon his superior officer."²¹⁴ The cuirassiers who were

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²¹⁴ The quoted passage is Si-borne's, and his words, chosen with unusual care, are the manifest result of a conflict between his deference for a "Royal Highness," reinforced, moreover, by the restraints of the quasi-official military reporter, and a soldierly indignation at the presumptuous meddling which thus, for the second time, wantonly destroyed the troops so unfortunate as to be

placed under the Royal Highness's command. It should be remembered that at Quatre Bras, two days before, the Prince of Orange had caused the 69th regiment to be cut to pieces under precisely the same circumstances—by ordering the deployment of a square in defiance of a commander who knew that it was about to be charged by cavalry. Certainly the Allies were heavily

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thus cutting the unfortunate Germans to pieces were under the rifles of the men of the 95th, who watched the scene from beyond the Charleroi road, but were unable to fire without destroying friend as well as foe; but presently came an opportunity when they poured in a deadly volley, and at the same instant the 3d hussars of the King's German Legion charged, and completely cleared the front of Ompteda's brigade. Supports, however, came up to the cuirassiers, and, after a momentary struggle, forced the hussars to retire.=On the left of the French troops which had achieved this success over Alten's division, others essayed the same manœuvre against Maitland's brigade. A mass of tirailleurs ascended the slope, and from an extended front directed a rapid and concentric fire into Maitland's left-hand square, while another party, still more on the (French) left, fired in the same manner upon the square formed by Adam's 95th rifles. Seeing how this fire told upon the squares, the Duke of Wellington rode up to the attacked battalion of the Guards and ordered it to form line and drive the skirmishers down the slope. This they did with perfect success, and were equally successful in re-forming the square when a body of cavalry moved up to charge them. The Guards, having delivered a volley into the horse-men, retired in good order to their position on the heights; and the cavalry, dashing on into the front of Adam's brigade, was nearly destroyed by the fire from the 52d regiment. Toward this end of the Allied line the fury of the French attack was at this time chiefly directed upon Hougomont, which proved able to take

handicapped by their valuable creation, the Kingdom of the Netherlands; but, unfortunately, it was not upon the authors or beneficiaries

of that political crime that the punishment fell—at least in these instances.

care of itself: it was at the centre only that their efforts seemed likely to win success.=About the rear of La Haye Sainte the contest had gone on without cessation. The French skirmishers occupied the garden, the bank of the Charleroi road, and especially the knoll by the sand-pit beyond it, and, concealing themselves as much as possible by lying or kneeling, except when they rose to fire, kept up a very rapid and persevering discharge against the brigades of Lambert and Kempt along the Wavre road; and these replied with equal spirit, though they lost heavily.²¹⁵ On their left of the Charleroi road swarms of French skirmishers continued to press the portion of the line occupied by Alten's division. One group occupied a mound at the junction of the two roads some 60 yards distant from the remains of Ompteda's brigade, who were now completely overmatched in numbers, and had besides exhausted their ammunition, so that many on this account fell to the rear.²¹⁶ In this part of the line,

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²¹⁵ Thiers represents Ney as coming up to this point to encourage D'Erlon in his attack on the Wavre road:—" 'Keep firm, friend,' he said to him, 'for if you and I do not fall here beneath the bullets of the English, we shall certainly fall beneath those of the emigrants.' Sad and bitter prophecy! This peerless hero, going from his infantry to his cavalry, sustained their courage under the enemy's fire, whilst he himself seemed invulnerable amidst the balls that rained around."

²¹⁶ Many, no doubt, retired for sufficient reasons, but the tide that set rearwards, on one pretext or another or on none at all, was by this time very great. Pringle says that an excessive number withdrew to look after the wounded, "some of

whom, as will always be found in the best armies, were glad to escape from the field. These thronged the road leading to Brussels, in a manner that none but an eye-witness could believe." In a note Pringle adds: "Numbers of those who had quitted the field of battle, and—let the truth be spoken—Englishmen too, fled from the town [Brussels], and never halted until they reached Antwerp. This is too well attested to be doubted." Gleig states that "officers as well as privates" were among the fugitives. Scott, in *Paul's Letters*, records how the baggage, "having been ordered to retreat during the action, became embarrassed in the narrow causeway leading through the great Forest of Soignies, and was there fairly sacked

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battalions of men had dwindled to scores or dozens ; some were commanded by subalterns ; Somerset's and Ponsonby's united cavalry brigades did not amount to two squadrons, and the other British and German cavalry of the right wing were similarly wasted ; most of the batteries had been silenced wholly or in part, so that in one place two British artillerymen were seen labouring to serve two guns until material for loading was exhausted, and in another the Duke of Wellington came upon a Belgian 6-gun battery with not a man to claim it, and he therefore had it removed to the rear. The 3d division in particular was in woful plight : Alten, its commander, had been carried, wounded, from the field ; Ompteda's brigade was nearly exterminated and almost without formation ; Kielmansegge's two squares were greatly diminished in size ; Kruse's Nassau brigade, next on their right, were greatly shaken under the continued fire ; and the interval thence to Sir Colin Halkett's British brigade, which was also much reduced, had become very great. In short, not enough men survived to cover the position, and there was virtually a gap in the Allied line extending from Halkett's brigade to the Charleroi road. At this point Lambert had formed the 27th British regiment in square, in the north-eastern angle of the two roads, so as either to confront an

and pillaged by the runaway Belgians and the peasantry—a disgraceful scene, which nothing but the brilliancy of the great victory, and the consequent enthusiasm of joy, could have allowed to be passed over without strict enquiry." This pillaging propensity of the Dutch-Belgians proved ungovernable during the march to Paris, and the Duke of Wellington made an example of two officers who flagrantly offended, sending them under arrest to the

Hague, with a letter to the King of the Netherlands concluding in these words:—"Je ne veux pas commander de tels officiers. Je suis assez longtemps soldat pour savoir que les pillards, et ceux qui les encouragent, ne valent rien devant l'ennemi ; et je n'en veux pas." = As to the fugitives from the battle, they had become so numerous that Zieten's corps, on approaching the field, believed the Anglo-Allied army generally to be in retreat.

advance up the Charleroi road, or to cover the apparently imminent retreat of Ompteda's and Kielmansegge's brigades. Upon this enfeebled front the French about La Haye Sainte now made another onset. To secure their right flank during their intended advance upon Alten, they began with so heavy a fire upon Lambert that within a few minutes more than half the men of the 27th fell. Then, while clouds of skirmishers poured up the slope in Alten's front, they ran forward two guns in advance of the north-eastern angle of the garden, and at a distance of 150 paces, and afterwards of only 100, fired grape-shot into Kielmansegge's left-hand square,—one discharge completely blowing away an entire side of the square. Under this and the musketry fire, which never slackened, the square soon became a mere clump of men; its commander and most of the officers had fallen; and its ammunition was nearly spent. The tirailleurs continued to press forward in compact line, when in their rear was heard the sound of drums beating the charge, which announced the coming of columns. To avert the forcing of the line which now seemed almost inevitable, the Prince of Orange ordered Kruse's 1st and 2d Nassau battalions to charge, and put himself at their head. As they came under the fire of the French, the Prince received a bullet-wound in his shoulder,²¹⁷ the attack failed, the

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²¹⁷ The Prince of Orange's wound was regarded as a great piece of luck for him. Scott says in *Paul's Letters*, writing at the time when it was the fashion to augur good things for the new Kingdom of the Netherlands: "Nothing could have happened so fortunate for the popularity of the House of Orange as the active and energetic character of the hereditary prince. His whole behaviour during

the actions of Quatre Bras and Waterloo, and the wound which (it may be almost said fortunately) he received upon the latter occasion, have already formed the strongest bond of union between his family and their new subjects, long unaccustomed to have sovereigns who could lead them to battle, and shed their blood in the national defence."

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Nassauers recoiled, and, under the vigorous onset of the French, they were carried, together with Kielmansegge's and Ompteda's brigades, 100 paces backwards. On the fall of the Prince of Orange, Capt. Shaw—afterwards Gen. Sir James Shaw Kennedy, whose own account is here followed—finding that apparently all the senior officers of the 3d division had fallen and that he was the only staff-officer present, galloped to the Duke of Wellington, then directing the defence being made by Maitland's Guards, and informed him that his line was open for the whole space between Halkett's and Kempt's brigades. The Duke answered, "I shall order the Brunswick troops to the spot, and other troops besides: go you and get all the German troops of the division on the spot that you can, and all the guns that you can find." Wellington—sending an order to the brigades of Chassé's Dutch-Belgian division to follow in support—himself led five battalions of the Brunswickers into the interval between Kruse's and Sir Colin Halkett's brigades.²¹⁸ But these reinforcements

²¹⁸ The Earl of Albemarle—who, it will be remembered, was an ensign in the 14th regiment, which was in Lord Hill's corps, and was at first stationed near the extreme right of the Allied line, acting with Clinton's division—cites Kennedy's story that Wellington promised to "order the Brunswick troops to the spot, and other troops besides." He then proceeds, in the following terms, to recount the experience of the 14th:—"I presume that our regiment formed a portion of the 'other troops' whom the Commander-in-Chief sent to fill up the hiatus, for it must have been about this time that Capt. Bridgeman, one of Lord Hill's aides-de-camp, brought us the order to ad-

vance. We marched in columns of companies. Emerging from the ravine we came upon an open valley, bounded on all sides by low hills. The hill in our front was fringed by the enemy's cannon, and we advanced to our new position amid a shower of shot and shells. . . . We halted and formed square in the middle of the plain. As we were performing this movement, a bugler of the 51st, who had been out with skirmishers, and had mistaken our square for his own, exclaimed, 'Here I am again, safe enough.' The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when a round shot took off his head and spattered the whole battalion with his brains, the colours

came suddenly under the heavy fire of the assailants, and in the thick smoke and confusion surrounding them they were unable to re-form properly from the irregularities caused by their hurried advance ; so that they too for the moment were borne backward by the vigorous dash of the French. But the Duke threw himself into the struggle, and by his voice and gestures rallied the Brunswickers ; Major von Norman's battalion first regained good order, stood its ground, and delivered a fire that checked the enemy before it ; and its

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and the ensigns in charge of them coming in for an extra share. One of them, Charles Fraser, a fine gentleman in speech and manner, raised a laugh by drawling out, 'How extremely disgusting!' A second shot carried off six of the men's bayonets ; a third broke the breast-bone of a lance-sergeant (Robinson), whose piteous cries were anything but encouraging to his youthful comrades. The soldier's belief that 'every bullet has its billet' was strengthened by another shot striking Ensign Cooper, the shortest man in the regiment, and in the very centre of the square. These casualties were the affair of a second. We were now ordered to lie down. Our square, hardly large enough to hold us when standing upright, was too small for us in a recumbent position. Our men lay packed together like herrings in a barrel. Not finding a vacant spot, I seated myself on a drum. Behind me was the Colonel's charger, which, with his head pressed against mine, was mumbling my epaulette, while I patted his cheek. Suddenly my drum capsized and I was thrown prostrate, with the feeling of a blow on the right cheek. I put my hand to my head, thinking half my face

was shot away, but the skin was not even abraded. A piece of shell had struck the horse on the nose exactly between my hand and my head, and killed him instantly. The blow I received was from the embossed crown on the horse's bit.—The French artillerymen had now brought us so completely within range, that, if we had continued much longer in this exposed situation, I should probably not have lived to tell my tale. We soon received the order to seek the shelter of a neighbouring hill. . . . Our new position was further in advance, but less exposed to the enemy's fire. We were now about 100 yards from the Nivelles *chaussée*, near to the abatis spoken of by Siborne, on which abatis the left wing of our right company rested. . . . On our right flank, and a little in advance, was a brigade of artillery, which I find from a recent publication [Mercer's *Journal of the Waterloo Campaign*] was the 9th, under the command of Capt. Mercer, who in describing his position also marks ours." = For Mercer's position, at the period the Earl of Albemarle's description has now reached, see pages 307, 308, text.

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example brought the remaining Brunswick battalions to assume an equally resolute attitude. The stand thus made was seconded by the troops on the left, those of Kruse, Kielmansegge, and Ompteda; and, having thus succeeded in stemming the French onset upon his centre, the Duke galloped back to his right, to complete his interrupted preparations for the storm manifestly about to break in that direction. At this critical moment Vivian's almost intact light cavalry brigade came up into the rear of the shaken troops.²¹⁹ The mere presence of such an effective force amid the general wreck went far to restore confidence; and they, moreover, interposed with material effect, for the 10th hussars, drawing up with closed files, stopped the retreat of the Nassauers, who were falling back in a body, and Vivian and his aids rode among the disordered infantry and brought them back into formation at a time when they seemed on the point of giving way. Kielmansegge, too,

²¹⁹ Vivian had held with his brigade the extreme left of the Allied line, and shortly before this had been informed by his patrols that Zieten's corps was coming up on the road from Ohain, and at the same time was made aware by Baron Muffling—who was with this wing, awaiting Zieten—how urgently cavalry was needed in the centre. Vivian at once proposed to Vandeleur—who commanded the cavalry division next on his right, and was his senior officer—that the two brigades should move to the centre. But Vandeleur—who appears to have been a precisian as well as a churl: “a brave but cautious officer,” is Hooper's phrase—declined to do anything without orders; and Vivian took the responsibility, put his brigade in motion in rear of Vandeleur's,

and met Lord Uxbridge, who was on his way to bring up the two brigades, and who now sent Vandeleur orders to follow, and himself rode with Vivian to the centre. The sight which greeted them there greatly surprised these horsemen, hitherto out of sight of the actual fighting, and the scene of ruin was such as to persuade them that they had been brought up to cover a retreat. Vivian, looking in vain for the cavalry which he had left there, asked of Lord Edward Somerset, “Where is your brigade?” “Here,” answered Somerset, pointing to a single squadron of horsemen and then to the dead and wounded men and horses on the ground—all that remained of what a few hours before had been a force of 2,000 dragoons.

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on whom the command of the 3d division had now devolved, showed great ability and coolness in restoring order, although the French skirmishers were again pushing up against the line and plying it with an incessant fire. He led on the remains of the Hanoverians and German Legion at the double-quick, their drums rolling; the Brunswickers responded to the movement; the Nassauers, cheered on by Vivian and his officers, followed the advance; the hussars came on in support. Before the general charge the French were forced to give way, and the variously constituted assemblage of Allied troops thus regained the position which the 3d division had long held so bravely. Thus the imperilled centre was restored just as the decisive movement of the action was approaching on the right.²²⁰

7 P.M.

²²⁰ Siborne's general summary of the character of the Allied troops contains the following mention of those engaged in this struggle for the maintenance of the centre:—"Of the troops of the King's German Legion, whether cavalry, infantry, or artillery, it is impossible to speak in terms of too high praise: suffice it to remark that their conduct was in every respect on a par with that of the British. . . . Of the four Hanoverian infantry brigades, that of Kielmansegge and a part of [Hew] Halkett's were the most actively engaged; Best's stood almost the entire day on the extreme left of the front line of the Anglo-Allied infantry, and Vincke's in reserve in front of Mont St. Jean. They had been but recently and hastily raised; and yet the manner in which such raw soldiers withstood, as Kielmansegge's brigade did, for so great a length of time the most furious assaults made by the gallant and well-disciplined

troops of France, would have conferred honour on long-tried veterans. The Brunswickers, who were also composed of young soldiers, performed a glorious part in the battle, and amply revenged the death of their Prince. Some of their battalions were much shaken at the moment Alten's division was driven back a short distance, but they speedily rallied and resumed their lost ground. Altogether, their bravery, which was frequently called into action, and their endurance, which was severely tested, merited the strongest commendation. The troops constituting the Nassau brigade, under Kruse (or more properly the 1st regiment of the Nassau contingent), were attached to Alten's division. They were, consequently, often in the thick of the fight, and though, on the occasion above alluded to, they were thrown into disorder and driven in by a furious onset of the enemy, they conducted them-

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At Hougomont, during the fourth period of the battle, the attack by the French had continued, having, indeed, never been intermitted since the action began. The heat and blinding smoke from the burning buildings made the place almost intolerable to the nearest of the defenders, but they kept up so constant a fire as to prevent any chance of escalade, and though the orchard frequently changed owners, the walled enclosures were

selves generally throughout the day with great steadiness." = An incident connected with the coming up of Chassé's division is recounted by the Earl of Albemarle, whose battalion of raw recruits belonging to the 14th regiment was at this time formed beside Capt. Mercer's battery on the extreme right of the Allied front line. "The steadiness of our peasant lads," he says, "which had already been tolerably tried, was about to be subjected to another test. There appeared on our right flank an armed force, some thousands strong, who advanced towards us singing and cheering. They wore the dress which the prints of the day described as belonging to the French army. Charles Brennan, an Irish lieutenant who had served all through the Peninsular war, called out, 'Och then, them's French, safe enough!' 'Hold your tongue, Pat,' thundered out our Colonel; 'what do you mean by frightening my boys?' but the expression of his countenance showed that he shared Pat's apprehension. They were neither of them singular in their belief. The attention of our neighbour, the 9th brigade of artillery, was directed to the same phenomenon. 'For a moment,' says General Mercer, 'an awful silence pervaded that part of the position, to which we anxiously turned

our eyes. "I fear it is all over," said Col. Gould, who still remained by us. Meantime the 14th, springing from the earth, had formed their square, whilst we [it is still Mercer who speaks], throwing back the guns of our right and left divisions, stood waiting in momentary expectation of being enveloped and attacked. The commanding officer of the 14th, to end our doubts, rode forward and endeavoured to ascertain who they were, but soon returned assuring us they were French. The order was already given to fire, when Col. Gould recognised them as Belgians.' The new comers were Gen. Chassé's Dutch-Belgian division, who had been posted in the early part of the day at Braine-la-Leude and were now ordered to the front. They had so recently formed a part of Napoleon's army that the slight change in their old uniform escaped the notice of the casual observer." = The mistake thus narrowly averted on the Allied right was actually made on their extreme left, where Zieten's Prussians took Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar's troops for French and attacked them. (See page 346, text). It had also occurred two days before at Quatre Bras, when the English fired upon Von Merlen's Belgian cavalry. (See note 38, page 69).

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never in danger. Once only did the position appear uncertain—at the time when the French renewed the attack along the whole line, and their cavalry and infantry pushed forward in such numbers as to threaten to isolate Hougomont from the Allied line. But the coming up of Du Plat's, Adam's, and Halkett's brigades put an end to this danger, and the garrison was so reinforced from Du Plat's troops as to render it ample for the defence. On the right of Hougomont Mitchell's infantry brigade, and that squadron of hussars which Grant had left to watch Piré's light-horse, sufficiently protected the right of the Allied line against the unimportant demonstrations which now and then were made in this quarter.=The outposts on the extreme Allied left—Papelotte and La Haye—were held by Prince Bernhard's Nassau troops against those of Durutte until the coming up of Zieten's corps in their rear brought on a more serious conflict on this flank, when these farms became part of the scene of the Prussian attack, as Smohain and Frischermont had already done.

The attack upon the French right which Blücher was preparing at the time Ney made his assault upon La Haye Sainte continued throughout this *The Prussian attack.* period of the battle. The Prussians advanced in two bodies: that on the right consisting of Losthin's (15th) and Hacke's (13th) brigades, which confronted Lobau in the open field; that on the left of Ryssel's (14th) and Hiller's (16th) brigades; while the interval between the two, which should have consisted of infantry if the Prussian strength had been adequate, was occupied by the reserve cavalry of Prince William of Prussia.²²¹ On the Prussian right little progress was made against Lobau, who, seconded by Durutte's division, made a firm stand; and Prince William's cavalry

²²¹ See diagram, page 323.

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suffered severely from the French musketry—two brigadiers, Schwerin and Watzdorff, being killed. On their left the Prussians had more immediate success. Hiller formed his 16th brigade into three columns of attack, each column consisting of two battalions, and advanced upon Planchenoit, Ryssel's brigade following in support. Duhesme, with eight battalions of the Young Guard, occupied both sides of the ravine through which lay the approach to the village. "While he made a shower of bullets and chain-shot rain on the Prussians, his youthful infantry²²²—some from among the trees and bushes, others from the houses in the village—defended themselves with a murderous discharge of musketry, and showed no inclination to abandon their position." The Prussians, however, after capturing one howitzer and two guns, entered the village and got possession of the churchyard, which was not only strong, being enclosed within a low stone wall set upon a steep outer bank, but from its elevation commanded the greater part of the village. But the French quickly established themselves in the surrounding houses and gardens, and concentrated their fire upon the Prussians; and great loss occurred on both sides within a very short time. French supports presently came up, and one of their columns threatened the Prussians in rear, so that they abandoned their advantage and withdrew from the village, pursued by Lobau's cavalry until they came under cover of their own batteries. The expelled Prussians rapidly rallied, re-formed, and, by Blücher's orders, renewed the attack, reinforced by 8 fresh battalions. "These 14 battalions descended into the ravine, which was lined on each side

²²² Thiers, from whom this and the following quotation concerning the Planchenoit struggle are taken,

uses the word "youthful" to describe the "Young Guard," every man of which was a veteran.

by the French, and advanced into the midst of an actual fiery gulf. Hundreds fell, but the survivors closed their ranks, marched over the dead bodies of their comrades, and, urging each other forward, succeeded at length in entering Planchenoit, and reaching the termination of the ravine. Another step, and they would be on the Charleroi road. The Young Guard fell back, quite discomfited by the violence to which they had been exposed. But Napoleon suddenly appears among them. It is the privilege of the Old Guard to repair every disaster. This invincible troop will not suffer us to lose our line of retreat, the last resource of our army. Napoleon summoned Gen. Morand, and, giving him a battalion of the 2d grenadiers and another of the 2d chasseurs, ordered him to repel this alarming attack on our rear. He rode along in front of their battalions. ‘My friends,’ he said, ‘the decisive moment is come : it will not suffice to fire ; you must come hand to hand with the enemy, and drive them back at the point of the bayonet into that ravine, whence they have issued to threaten the army, the Empire, and France.’ ‘*Vive l’Empereur*,’ was the sole reply of this heroic troop. The two appointed battalions, leaving their post, formed into column, and advanced, one on the right, the other on the left of the ravine, whence the Prussians were already issuing in great numbers. They advanced on their assailants with such firmness of step and such strength of arm that all yielded to their approach. Enraged against an enemy that had sought to turn the position, they overthrow or slaughter all that oppose them, and soon put those battalions to flight that had beaten the Young Guard. Sometimes with the bayonet, sometimes with the butt-end of the musket, they stab or strike ; and such was the fury that animated them that a drummer of one of the battalions pursued the

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fugitives with his drumsticks. Carried away by the torrent of confusion they had themselves produced, the two battalions of the Old Guard rushed into the ravine and pursued the Prussians up the opposite heights as far as the village of Maransart, opposite to Planchenoit. Here they were received with a volley of grape, and compelled to retreat; but they remained masters of Planchenoit and the Charleroi road, and to avenge the defeat of the Young Guard two battalions of the Old Guard had sufficed. The victims of this fearful charge may be estimated at 2000." Thiers' story should be qualified by the statement that in this resolute charge by the French the two battalions of the Old Guard were by no means alone, but moved at the head of the 8 battalions of the Young Guard. The struggle terminated in an affair of cavalry, in which both sides suffered loss, but neither gained material advantage. Bülow had been defeated in his second attempt to take Planchenoit, and it was determined not to make a third trial until the arrival of Pirch's corps, now near at hand. Meantime his troops re-formed in their original position, which they maintained without difficulty. Napoleon, seeing from their dispositions that another attack would be made, sent further reinforcements in this direction—one battalion of chasseurs of the Old Guard, under Gen. Pelet, who was charged by all means to hold Planchenoit, and another battalion of chasseurs which was to occupy the wood of Chantelet and prevent the village being turned on its right. Thus 11 battalions of the Guard had by this time passed into the defence against the Prussians, and Napoleon's sole reserve, with which he must meet all further requirements of the battle, consisted of 12 battalions.²²³ =

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²²³ The Guard originally consisted of 24 battalions—8 of the Old, 8 of the Middle, and 8 of the Young Guard, 12,000 men in all; but after

Zieten's 1st Prussian corps was about entering the field at this time—that is, at the time when Wellington had retrieved the breaking of the Allied centre, *The Prussian* and Blücher was re-forming his troops after *attack*. their second repulse at Planchenoit; and his leading brigade, Steinmetz's 1st, together with a part of his reserve cavalry, were on their march from Ohain to join Bülow's right at the eastern hamlets. The Duke of Wellington, while hard-pressed on his right wing, had sent his aide-de-camp, Col. Freemantle, in quest of whatever Prussian force might be nearest, to desire that it would strengthen the weak points in his line and enable him to maintain his ground. Zieten, however, declined to make any detachment from his corps; yet the fact of its approach enabled Vivian, who was afterwards followed by Vandeleur, to take his light cavalry to the relief of the endangered position.²²⁴

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their loss at the battle of Ligny, two battalions of the Old Guard had been consolidated into one.

²²⁴ Up to this time the expected assistance from the Prussians had only taken the form of diminishing the force which Napoleon could employ against the Anglo-Allied army—a highly and perhaps decisively important aid, but one of which those in the Allied ranks were unconscious. The pictures which have been drawn of Wellington's anxious outlook for Blücher agree in being very highly coloured. Scott probably started this line of historical decoration by this passage in *Paul's Letters*:—"A friend of ours had the courage to ask the Duke of Wellington whether in that conjuncture he looked often to the woods from which the Prussians were expected to issue?—'No,' was the answer; 'I looked oftener at my watch than at

anything else. I knew if my troops could keep my position till night, I must be joined by Blücher before morning, and we would not have left Bonaparte an army next day. But,' continued he, 'I own I was glad as one hour of daylight slipped away after another, and our position was still maintained.'" Alison paraphrases Scott, and Thiers seems to follow Alison when he says, "The Duke of Wellington, who was as firm as Ney was brave, . . . looked at his watch and prayed that Blücher or night might come to his rescue." The Rev. Mr. Abbott puts it much more dramatically:—"Wellington stood upon a gentle eminence, watching with intense anxiety for the coming of Blücher. He knew that he could hold out but a short time longer. As he saw his lines melting away, he repeatedly looked at his watch, and then fixed his gaze

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Napoleon's fourth grand attack had not been futile like its predecessors. The taking of La Haye Sainte had rendered it possible, by a sufficient exertion of force, to break the Allied line; and this must have been accomplished by a well-timed onset of the French reserves. But Napoleon, engrossed with the Prussians, had ignored Ney's appeal and let the propitious moment pass; while Wellington, realising when it was well nigh too late the possible consequences of the neglect to properly defend La Haye Sainte, atoned for his oversight by the prompt energy and judgment with which he repaired the breach in his line and personally directed the dis-

upon the distant hills, and, as he wiped the perspiration which mental anguish extorted from his brow, exclaimed, 'Would to Heaven that Blücher or night would come!' = The circumstances under which the Duke, or other people, first saw the Prussians actually come are given by the historians with a diversity as curious as the monotony about his watch. In *Paul's Letters*, the Duke stands with Maitland's Guards, and looking toward the French right, sees the disorder consequent upon Zieten's corps' coming up. "It was remarked," says Scott, "that the sharpness and precision of the Duke's sight enabled him to mention these circumstances two or three minutes before they could be discovered by the able officers around him." The Rev. Mr. Gleig, knowing the position of Planchenoit and that Bülow's troops arrived there, makes the Duke look there for them:—"The Duke gazed, and soon saw the uprising of smoke over the trees. . . . He saw that Blücher was true to his word. *His troops* beheld nothing except the formidable outline of the

masses which were collected to assault them." The Rev. Mr. Abbott, however, knows a great deal better than this. "Two long, dark columns," he says, "of 30,000 each, the united force of Blücher and Bülow, came pouring over the hills." Then they "came rushing upon the plain." Then "the Allied army saw at a glance its advantage, and a shout of exultation burst simultaneously from their lips." Siborne had shown quite conclusively, long before the time of Mr. Abbott, why the doings of "the united force of Blücher and Bülow" were not observed by the Allied army:—"It was only from the high ground on which the extreme left of the Anglo-Allied line rested that a general view could be obtained of the Prussian movements. As regards, however, the village of Planchenoit itself, the spire of the church was all that could be seen." While the Duke of Wellington, therefore, and some of his officers were aware that the Prussians were in action, they could not judge of their progress, and the army in general was as yet ignorant of their presence.

position of his troops until he had brought safety where all had seemed on the verge of disaster.²²⁵ Napoleon,

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²²⁵ Nothing can be more contradictory than the opinions as to the state of the battle at this period. On the one hand, the moderate and guarded Jomini says, in his *Summary*, that "the victory was already more than won,"—by Napoleon, that is, at the time of the coming of Zieten's corps, which was "more than sufficient to snatch victory from him." And again: "It is almost certain that Napoleon would have remained master of the field of battle, but for the arrival of 65,000 Prussians [there were but 51,944] on his rear,—a decisive and disastrous cir-

cumstance, the prevention of which was not entirely in his power." On the other hand, by all Englishmen at that time, and by many to this day, it has been denied that the victory was ever for a moment in doubt; that the final result was determined by the intervention of the Prussians; or that Wellington made any error in the conduct of the battle. Such exaggeration of patriotism and hero-worship of course overshot its mark and provoked equally extravagant depreciation, as in one of Byron's references in *Don Juan* to the Duke and his victory:—

" —Precedence upon such occasions
Will oftentimes make deadly quarrels burst
Out between friends as well as allied nations:
The Briton must be bold who really durst
Put to such trial John Bull's partial patience
As say that Wellington at Waterloo
Was beaten,—though the Prussians say so too;

" And that if Blücher, Bülow, Gneisenau,
And God knows who besides in 'au' and 'ou,'
Had not come up in time to cast an awe
Into the hearts of those who fought till now
As tigers combat with an empty craw,
The Duke of Wellington had ceased to show
His orders, also to receive his pensions,
Which are the heaviest that our history mentions."

The French, naturally enough, believed not only that the battle was theirs but for the Prussians' intervention, but even that Wellington himself was thoroughly convinced of his defeat, and was astonished to

find himself conqueror. Brialmont, referring to this current idea in order to refute it, describes a caricature of Wellington which circulated in France, and bore these lines:—

" D'où vient cet air d'étonnement
Sur ce visage où dût briller la gloire?
C'est que le peintre a, maladroitement,
Peint le héros le jour de sa victoire."

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on the other hand, was not only remiss in neglecting the advantage which his lieutenant's valour had won

What is it fills that face with puzzled wonder
Which really ought to beam with glory's ray?
The painter's drawn his hero, by a blunder,
As he appeared on his triumphal day.

Wellington himself—who never undervalued his own achievements—did not countenance the exaggerated claims as to this battle, nor ignore facts which were evident enough to those who witnessed it. He was wont to say that there were several times when he “thought it was all over with us,” and that “the last hour of the battle was indeed a trying one.” Sir Augustus Frazer—who attended the Duke during most of the day, and whose judgment that Napoleon would have won the day had the cavalry charges been supported by infantry, has been already quoted (see note 189, page 292, *ad finem*)—wrote of that and the succeeding period of the battle: “Several times were critical; but confidence in the Duke, I have no doubt, animated every breast. His Grace exposed his person, not unnecessarily, but nobly; without his personal exertions, his continual presence wherever and whenever more than usual exertions were required, the day had been lost. ‘Twice have I saved this day by perseverance,’ said his Grace before the last great struggle, and said so most justly.” Wellington himself admitted his fault in undervaluing La Haye Sainte; “but,” in Kennedy's words, “the error was most ably and nobly amended.” The other fault attributed to him in connection with this part of the battle—that of leaving 18,000 troops at Hal when his own line was so weak

—has already been discussed on page 207. = Much has been said of the Duke's exposure of his person throughout the whole battle, and especially at the time of the cavalry charges and when rallying his broken centre under a close and hot musketry fire—constantly animating his men by word and example, and always present at the point of danger. One instance of his coolness under fire occurred when he stood under the tree afterwards called after him, through whose boughs the bullets were rattling. “That's good practice,” he said to one of his staff; “I think they fire better than they did in Spain.” The two following are given by Siborne:—“At one period of the battle, when the Duke was surrounded by several of his staff, it was very evident that the group had become the object of the fire of a French battery. The shot fell fast about them, generally striking and turning up the ground on which they stood. Their horses became restive, and ‘Copenhagen’ himself so fidgety that the Duke, getting impatient, and having reason for remaining on this spot, said to those about him, ‘Gentlemen, we are rather too close together—better to divide a little.’ Subsequently, at another point of the line, an officer of artillery came up to the Duke, and stated that he had a distinct view of Napoleon, attended by his staff; that he had the guns of his battery well pointed in that

him, but he so inadequately informed himself as to the state of the action in that part of the field that, when he finally advanced his reserves, it was not against the point weakened by Ney's attack, but against that which Wellington had made the strongest in his entire line. Napoleon's part in this attack, in short, justifies the criticism of Brialmont: "He made the first attack against La Haye Sainte with over-deep masses; he engaged, or allowed to be engaged, his cavalry too soon; finally, he showed some hesitation when, at 6 o'clock, he had the proof that a general effort in the centre might succeed. In general, all the attacks made during this day had the defect of being badly supported."=On the side of the Prussians Napoleon had, at any rate for the moment, stayed their advance, and hoped not unreasonably that the reinforcements from the *élite* of the Grand Army which he had sent to Lobau, one of the ablest of his generals, might hold them in check while he made his single remaining effort against the enemy in his front.²²⁶

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direction, and was prepared to fire. His Grace instantly and emphatically exclaimed, 'No! no! I'll not allow it. It is not the business of commanders to be firing upon each other.' The last incident is in strong contrast with the story—which, however, is denied—that at the battle of Dresden Napoleon himself directed the firing into the Allied staff of that gun which brought down Gen. Moreau. It is remarkable that at Waterloo, while the casualties on Napoleon's staff were inconsiderable, not one of Wellington's escaped unwounded. As to his preservation, Kennedy says: "I do not consider that any adequate idea can have been formed as to the battle of

Waterloo by any one who does not come to the conclusion that its result would have been eminently imperilled had the Duke of Wellington fallen in the action at any period of it previous to the last general attack."

²²⁶ Napoleon has been censured for not retreating, even at this juncture, instead of continuing the action against the combined Allied armies. Bülow's position, on his right and rear and close upon the Charleroi road, was such as to make retreat impossible from a military point of view. Speaking of a time before this difficulty arose—of the time when the Prussians first appeared,—Thiers shows the political impossibility:—"It was certainly in his power to re-

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[*Note*.—The doings of Wellington's and of Blücher's forces have hitherto been so entirely distinct that it has been possible

treat and decline fighting, but it would be a very serious thing to retreat from a battle already commenced, and that in presence of both English and Prussians. Such conduct would be a renunciation of the ascendancy gained by the victory of Ligny; it would be consenting to recross as a fugitive the frontier which two days before he had passed as a conqueror; and all this with the conviction of having to meet, within a fortnight, 250,000 additional enemies, when the Austrians, Russians, and Bavarians would have arrived. It was certainly better to fight out a battle which, if gained, would definitively maintain things in the position in which we wished to place them, than, by retreating, allow the two invading columns from the north and east to unite and overpower us with their combined forces. In the actual state of things there was no choice but to conquer or die. Napoleon was convinced of this, and, as the events of the day assumed a more serious aspect, they taught him nothing that he had not previously known." Charras deals with the same problem which Thiers has considered, but reaches a different solution. "It is very probable," he says, "that his [Napoleon's] personal situation was not foreign to his determination to pursue success when success had become impossible. If he returned to France weakened, discredited by a check, he risked being precipitated from his throne. To maintain himself upon it he needed a victory, and under the sway of this egotistical preoccupation he nerved himself to play against for-

tune, staking his last soldier, as an unfortunate gamester, ruined, throws his last piece of gold on the green cloth of the gambling table." = Besides retreating, Napoleon had another alternative, which Brialmont mentions thus:—"He [Napoleon] entertained the idea for a moment of changing his front to the rear, by rendering Hougomont his pivot on the left, and Planchenoit his *point d'appui* upon the right; but he immediately abandoned that project, because, it is said, he still clung to the hope of being joined by Grouchy, and because, on the other hand, the last report led him to believe that the Allies were not in a condition to offer a much more prolonged resistance." Brialmont, after expressing his doubt of any story that represents Napoleon as influenced by a continued expectation of Grouchy's coming, adds this note:—"This is Vaudoncourt's account; that of Gourgaud is a little different. 'Napoleon,' says he, 'hesitated for a moment whether he would not change his line of operations and establish it on the Nivelles road, thus turning the right of the English army instead of the left, and marching upon Mont St. Jean by the Nivelles road, after having carried Braine-la-Leude.'" Gen. Gourgaud adds that the plan was abandoned because it would have compromised Grouchy, and favoured the junction of the Allies. By any plan which allowed this junction Brialmont points out, "the object of the campaign would be defeated, and the Emperor be obliged to re-enter France, and to assume the

to separate the accounts of the two. In the fifth phase of the battle, however, the operations of the two Allied armies, at first independent, presently combine. To avoid a digression in the middle of Napoleon's last charge, it is necessary to describe the doings of the Prussians down to their entering upon the field of the Anglo-Allied action, before taking up Napoleon's attack upon Wellington. The two trains of events were, of course, simultaneous.]

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Zieten's and Pirch's corps were rapidly approaching the field, and portions of each came upon it, at the time Napoleon was preparing his last reserve to attack the Anglo-Allied line. Zieten had been expected to occupy the part of the position held by Vandeleur's and Vivian's cavalry brigades, and these troops, urgently needed at the centre, had moved thither as soon as they knew of the Prussian approach on the road from Ohain. But Zieten had sent forward a staff-officer to reconnoitre, who judged from the signs in the rear of the Allied centre that Wellington's right wing was already retreating;²²⁷ and on the strength of his

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defensive against half a million of the Allies." = Jomini, in his *Summary of the Campaign*, says of Napoleon's schemes at this juncture: "It is said, however, that he flattered himself with leading fortune under his banner, by refusing his right threatened by very strong forces, in order to bring all his efforts to bear through his left on Hougomont and Mont St. Jean—a rash change of front that necessarily abandoned the line of retreat to Charleroi to follow a new one on the Nivelles causeway, and which, moreover, destroyed all communication with Grouchy. Had the success of this measure been in the least problematical, its execution

had become impossible; even the assembling of the entire Guard could not be effected; disorder began to infect the cavalry and Durutte's division, menaced by three times their number on the plateau between Smohain and the causeway; it was necessary to fly to D'Erlon's support." Yielding to this last necessity, accordingly, Napoleon arranged the last charge of the Guard. In his *Life of Napoleon* Jomini makes the Emperor say, "This was a bold, and by some considered a rash measure, . . . but its character cannot be properly judged of, as circumstances at the time prevented its execution."

²²⁷ See note 216, page 328.

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report Zieten called back his leading troops and changed the direction of his advance, intending to join the corps of Bülow, already in action. His error was soon corrected by Baron Müffling, who had left Wellington's headquarters-staff to dispose of these troops on their arrival, had for some time awaited them, and now galloped on to stop their false movement; and Zieten's cavalry accordingly took up the position just vacated by Vandeleur and Vivian, on the left of Best's Hanoverian brigade, while his infantry went forward to take part in the struggle for the hamlets in the valley. Here the delay occasioned by Zieten's mistake had given a momentary advantage to the enemy; for Durutte, who held the apex of the angle at which Napoleon's line turned, had made a vigorous push to establish himself in a position which would sever communication between Blücher and Wellington; his skirmishers had ejected the Nassau brigade of Prince Bernhard from the hamlet of Papelotte, but had been checked when trying to take the Papelotte and La Haye farms; and further on his right he was engaged with the Prussians under Bülow who had got a foothold in Smohain.²²⁸ But Zieten retrieved the loss. His 1st brigade, that of Steinmetz, came up on the right of Smohain and advanced rapidly upon La Haye and Papelotte, where, partly through haste, and partly from the uniforms of the Nassauers, they mistook Prince Bernhard's troops for French and fired upon them, and it was not until several discharges had been interchanged, causing losses on both sides, that the mistake was discovered. The combined force of the Prussians and Nassauers now

²²⁸ Exactly what passed here is disputed. Brialmont says in his text: "Durutte's division had carried in succession Papelotte, La Haye, and Smohain." In a note he

adds: "This is denied by Van Loben Sels, because the fact is not related in any Dutch document. But French authors are unanimous in asserting it."

enabled them to dislodge the French from the eastern hamlets, and gradually force them back into the valley.²²⁹—On Zieten's left, meanwhile, Pirch had brought up to Bülow's assistance his reserve cavalry and two of his infantry brigades, Tippleskirchen's 5th and Krafft's 6th; the third, Brause's 7th brigade, having been ordered to cross to the south of the Lasne and occupy Maransart, so covering Bülow's left flank; while the remaining brigade, Langen's 8th, had been detained at Wavre by Grouchy's advance.²³⁰ Pirch himself led Tippleskirchen's brigade to reinforce Hiller and Ryssel for the third storming of Planchenoit, having Krafft's brigade as a reserve. The cavalry of the 2d corps was deployed in three lines on the right of that of the 4th corps, thus occupying the interval between the wings of Blücher's force, and confronting Domont's French cavalry, then in reserve. The disposition of the Prussians, as they made ready to attack Planchenoit with their left wing and Lobau's force with their right, were as shown in the diagram.²³¹ The

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²²⁹ Brialmont—following a letter from Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar to his father, which is quoted by Van Loben Sels—thus recounts this attack:—"Blücher found himself in the presence of the Nassau troops, under the command of the Prince of Saxe-Weimar, who still wore the uniform of the Imperial army. Blücher, mistaking them for the enemy, drove them from their position. The French officers observed the retrograde movement, and shouted, 'The left gives way! Grouchy is coming!' The word flew from mouth to mouth, but was immediately succeeded by the dis-

heartening and ominous cry, 'The Prussians! The Prussians!' Napoleon [in Gourgaud] charges Durrut's division with having made a bad defence of La Haye. He asserts also that in the ranks of this division the cry was raised, '*Sauve qui peut!*' But Marshal Ney, who was at hand, and quitted the field of battle among the last, affirms that he heard no such cry."

²³⁰ See page 162.

²³¹ The diagram is on the next page.=The accessions at 7 o'clock had brought up Blücher's strength to 51,944 men and 104 guns, as follows:—

Frischermont

Smohain

La Haye

Papelotte

Schwerin
Sylvere

Steinmetz, 1

DURTE

Schulenberg

Kraft, 6

Hacke, 13

and
Losthin, 15

Sohr

Thunen

Sohr

Schulenberg

Schwerin

Watzdorff

BÜLOW

Ryssel, 14,

Hiller, 16,

Tippelskirchen, 5 } PIRCH

JEANNIN

Suberrie

SIMMER

Domont

LOBAU

La Belle
Alliance

Imperial Guard
Planche-noit

Charleroi

Road

Prussians moved to the attack at just about the time the Imperial Guard, on the other side of the field, came in conflict with Wellington's line. While Zieten's cavalry attached themselves to the Anglo-Allied line, and followed its movements, his infantry, the brigade of Steinmetz, united with Prince Bernhard's, drove Durutte's division backward from the eastern hamlets, took his artillery, and pursued him in the direction of La Belle Alliance, reaching the Charleroi road from the east just as the defeated Imperial Guard were driven upon it from the west.²³² = Next on Zieten's

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	Infantry	Cavalry	Artillery	Guns
Previously in the field . . .	25,381	2,720	1,143	64
Part of Zieten's (1st) corps . .	2,582	1,670	274	16
„ Pirch's (2d) „ . . .	13,520	4,468	386	24
Total	41,283	8,858	1,803	104

The infantry of Blücher's force was drawn up in columns of battalions, arranged checkerwise: for instance, Krafft's brigade was formed thus—

— — —
— — — —
— — —

In the long interval between the battalions in the front line was the artillery. Skirmishers preceded each column in the usual manner.

²³² One of the many disputes as to the order and relative importance of events arises at this point. The English claim that the Imperial Guard's defeat and flight produced the panic and flight of the French centre and right, and that the Prussians did little more than follow up the fugitives. The Prussians hold that Zieten's attack originated the movement of the French in retreat, quite independently of the British

success. Siborne goes with his countrymen in representing that Durutte's division became alarmed by the disaster in its rear, and says that it "at once saw the certainty of its being cut off if it remained in its present attitude, and hence, aware of its own helplessness, it took to flight."

= Thiers, on the other hand, takes the Prussian view so decidedly as to say that "the Prussian corps commanded by Zieten, arriving unexpectedly, turned into defeat what might have been a victory, though a sanguinary and dearly purchased one." Thiers fixes the first panic and cries of "*Sauve qui peut!*" among Durutte's troops at the moment when Napoleon was yet preparing the advance of the Imperial Guard. = Jomini—who is singularly incorrect as to the hours at which events occurred during this battle, but wonderfully clear in his insight into

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left, Bülow's right wing, composed of Losthin's and Hacke's brigades, had moved at the same time upon Lobau, preluding their attack by a storm of artillery fire much heavier than the French could bring to bear in reply. Lobau fought with his invariable skill and valour, and held his ground until Durutte's troops—and indeed those of D'Erlon's whole corps—swept past his left flank and rear in an uncontrollable panic. This quickly spread through his ranks, and Lobau's corps was added to the mass of fugitives into which the entire right wing of the Grand Army had by this time dissolved.

8.15 P.M.

In Planchenoit the struggle was very differently contested, outlasting that in any other part of the field. The strength of the Imperial Guard which occupied the village had been reinforced since the last attack by Gen. Pelet's battalion of chasseurs of the Old Guard; and the central portion of the village was now strongly held, especially the walled churchyard, which was made a sort of fortress. The leading columns from the assailing Prussian brigades—Tippelskirchen's, of the 2d corps, and Ryssel's and Hiller's, of the 4th—moved through a heavy fire from the French batteries

cause and effect—makes the defeat of both French wings simultaneous, and that of each independent of what befell the other. "Zieten," he says, "easily overthrows Durutte, at the same time he [though this was Pirch] outflanks the left of the crotchet formed by Lobau and the Young Guard. . . . All this portion of the Imperial army, overrun and surrounded by quadruple numbers, crowd upon each other and seek safety in flight. . . . Wellington, on his part, . . . burst on the Old Guard with an overwhelming supe-

riority, at the same time that Blücher's Prussian cavalry outflanks Durutte, and thus gets in rear of the line." It appears to be pretty clear that Jomini's statement is correct, and that the repulse of the French at either extremity of their line—of the Guard by Wellington and of Durutte by Zieten—was so nearly coincident that it is impossible to determine the priority. Probably the two events were wholly independent of one another, and the *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, is entirely inapplicable.

into the approaching lanes, and made their way toward the eastern side of the church. "The Prussians, extending their front so as to envelop a considerable portion of the churchyard, and taking advantage of the houses and enclosures which they had reached on their own side, maintained a terrific fire upon their opponents, and, as the latter appeared determined to keep them at bay till the last, a great loss of life occurred on both sides. The soldiers of the Imperial Guard fought desperately, and so greatly was their animosity excited that some officers of the 15th Prussian regiment and of the Silesian Landwehr, who had been made prisoners in the previous attack, were with difficulty saved by Gen. Pelet's personal exertions from becoming a sacrifice to their fury. Reinforcements were moved into the churchyard from the reserves on the western side, and the pertinacity with which the attacks upon it were repelled showed very plainly that other means than that of a front assault must be resorted to for forcing the French from a post which afforded them such superior advantages in the defence of the village. If the Prussians attempted to outflank the churchyard by advancing along the low open space on its right, they became exposed to the commanding fire from its walls, to that from the opposite houses, and, in front, to the reserves. If they ventured to pass close by its left, they had but a narrow road open to them, bounded by the churchyard wall on one side, strongly lined by the defenders, and by the houses on the other which the enemy still occupied, and presenting also at its further extremity a farm-house and its offices in flames, situated so close to the churchyard as to conceal by its smoke any column of reserve that might be posted in that quarter. Hence it was determined to act upon a broader extent of front, and to turn the entire village

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on both flanks, so as either to force or to intercept the retreat of the enemy from his stronghold in the churchyard.”²³³ A strong force of Prussian skirmishers was accordingly pushed forward on the south of Planchenoit on both sides of the Lasnes, and especially upon a ridge of ground between the Lasnes and the rivulet flowing through the village, where a party of the Guard made a resolute stand. “Along the crest of this ridge runs a narrow road, with several cottages on either side; the ground is thoroughly intersected with hedges and studded with trees, and altogether admirably adapted for a protracted defence by light troops. Every house, every hedge, and every lane was gallantly contested. The Prussians, not only boldly attacking in front, but skilfully and gradually turning the ridge on both sides, at length gained possession of all this portion of the village, and thus outflanked the troops in the churchyard, who maintained to the last the most desperate defence. In the meantime, the houses and enclosures on the left [north] of the church had also been turned on that side by the right of the Prussian attack, and principally by the 5th Westphalian Landwehr, the skirmishers of which had beaten back their opponents close under the walls of the burning buildings—the bright flames of which, gleaming upon the combatants who rent the air with their shouts, gave a peculiar wildness to this scene of mortal strife. But still more wild and awful must have been the scene within the church, as the red flood of light which they poured through the windows of the aisles fell upon the agonised and distorted features of the wounded and the dying with which the sacred edifice was at that moment filled.. The Prussians continued pressing forward along

²³³ This quotation and that following are from Siborne.

both flanks of the village, driving the Imperial Guard from house to house, from hedge to hedge, and from tree to tree, until at length it became obvious to the French that their rear would soon be intercepted. The latter were also by this time fully aware of the *déroute* of the main army, and, giving up all for lost, as they fell back upon the western portion of the village, they made a hasty and disorderly retreat toward Maison du Roi. The chasseurs of the Old Guard were the last to quit the churchyard, and suffered severely as they retired. Their numbers were awfully diminished, and Pelet, collecting together about 250 of them, found himself vigorously assailed by the Prussian cavalry from the moment he quitted the confines of Planchenoit and entered upon the plain between the latter and the highroad. At one time, his ranks having opened out too much in the hurry of their retreat, some of the Prussian troops in pursuit, both cavalry and infantry, endeavoured to capture the eagle, which, covered with black crape, was carried in the midst of this devoted little band of veterans. Pelet, taking advantage of a spot of ground which afforded them some degree of cover against the fire of grape by which they were constantly assailed, halted the standard-bearer and called out, "*A moi, chasseurs! sauvons l'aigle ou mourons autour d'elle!*" The chasseurs immediately pressed around him, forming what is usually termed the rallying-square, and, lowering their bayonets, succeeded in repulsing the charge of cavalry. Some guns were then brought to bear upon them, and subsequently a brisk fire of musketry; but, notwithstanding the awful sacrifice which was thus offered up in defence of their precious charge, they succeeded in reaching the main line of retreat, favoured by the universal confusion, as also by the general obscurity which now prevailed, and

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thus saved alike the eagle and the honour of the regiment.²³⁴

Bülow and Pirch had thus swept away the last con-
tending remnant of the Grand Army, and
The Prussian they now joined their victorious countrymen
attack. V. and allies on their right in the general pursuit.

V. Last Charge of the Imperial Guard.

Napoleon was no sooner relieved for the moment from the pressure of the Prussians on his right by the repulse of Bülow's second assault upon Planchenoit than he set himself to the preparation of his last reserves for another and decisive attack upon the British line, in the

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²³⁴ Siborne makes no tribute to Lobau's services on the French right. Thiers only mentions him as among the wounded. Chesney says of him: "Lobau, who altogether had 16,000 men placed under him that day, held his own in the village manfully. Not even amid the burning ruins by the Danube, where he first won Napoleon's praise and saved the Grand Army from an earlier Waterloo [at Aspern], had this brave general shown a more undaunted courage. Honoured be the man who by his devotion not only gave to his falling chief that last desperate chance, but time for escape when it too was lost, and the Empire overthrown!" Sir Augustus Frazer's only reference to Lobau is in this discreditable story: "Among the generals taken is, as report says, Lefebvre-Desnouettes; if so, he ought to be hanged. A Count Lobau, governor of these provinces, and well known to the Duke, was also taken, and, with several generals, wished to see his Grace on the score

of former acquaintance, but the Duke refused to see any of them, and drily added that he associated only with gentlemen." = Jomini, in the *Summary of the Campaign of 1815*, says of the last struggle in this part of the field: "The Young Guard and Lobau struggle with rare bravery against the constantly increasing forces of the Prussians. . . . Duhesme and Barrois are severely wounded; Lobau, in endeavouring to rally his men, falls into the hands of the enemy; Pelet shows front with a handful of heroes, about whom crowd a scattered few. The very report of Gen. Gneisenau on this celebrated battle will ever remain the most splendid testimony to the heroic defence of these 12,000 or 15,000 French against 60,000 Prussians, favoured, moreover, by the nature of the battlefield, which, rising on their side into an amphitheatre, gave to their numerous artillery a terrible ascendancy over that of their adversaries."

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desperate hope of forcing Wellington from the field before Blücher had time to develop his strength. He had at his disposal only 12 battalions of intact troops—the entire 8 battalions of the Middle Guard and 4 of the Old; and 2 of these were quite as small a force as ought to be left in defence of the headquarters. Drouot brought up these veterans from the position they had hitherto occupied in rear of La Belle Alliance into the space between the south-eastern angle of Hougomont and the Charleroi road, and the 10 battalions destined for the attack were drawn up in two columns in rear of the central elevation. To these was given the task of breaking Wellington's line at the old point of attack on the right wing. At the same time the whole extent of the Allied line was to be assailed with redoubled violence by all the French infantry corps; and the wasted remains of the cavalry, in such order as their shattered state permitted, were drawn up in rear and on both flanks of the columns of the Guard, ready to follow their advance if they succeeded, or to cover their retreat if they failed.²³⁵ = This mustering of

²³⁵ The diagram at page 323 will explain the charge of the Guard if the changed position of the British light cavalry regiments be borne in mind. These had left their ground on the extreme left of the Allied line, which was now held by Zieten's Prussian cavalry, and had moved to the right—Vandeleur's brigade now standing in rear of D'Aubremé's Dutch-Belgian infantry brigade, and Vivian's in rear of the 3d division, that is, covering the space from Kielmansegge's to Ditmar's brigade. All the Anglo-Allied infantry retained their former positions, and were confronted for the most part by the same antagonists as before, viz.: commen-

cing on the French left of Durutte—who was engaged with Prince Bernhard and Zieten, as already described in the text—Marcognet's division attacked Best's brigade; Alix attacked Pack, Kempt, and Lambert; Donzelot attacked the 3d division and the various troops intermixed with it; the Imperial Guard attacked Maitland's brigade of British Guards and Adam's 3d British brigade; Bachelu supported the Imperial Guard; and Foy and Jerome renewed their efforts to take Hougomont. = The arrangement of the Guard for the attack is shown in the diagram on the following page.

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the enemy's troops was not lost upon Wellington, who, moreover, had been explicitly warned by a deserting

		——— 1st bat. 3d Gren.	} Middle Guard.
		——— 2d " " "	
		——— 1st " 3d Chas.	
		——— 2d " " "	
Middle Guard	{	1st bat. 4th Gren.	———
		2d " " "	———
		1st " 4th Chas.	———
		2d " " "	———
Old Guard	{	1st " 1st Chas.	———
		2d " " "	———

The column nearest the Charleroi road consisted of 4 battalions, 2 of grenadiers and 2 of chasseurs,—all of the Middle Guard,—formed in columns of divisions in mass. The column on the left consisted of 6 battalions, 4 of which were of grenadiers and chasseurs of the Middle Guard, formed as in the other column; and the 2 rear battalions were chasseurs of the Old Guard, and marched both to the rear and to the left of the leading battalions of the column. The 10 battalions contained 6,000 men, Thiers says, "all well tried and more or less experienced soldiers, resolved to conquer or die, and equal to forcing the lines of any infantry whatever." Chesney speaks of them as "altogether too weak for the work put upon them;" but he continues, "They advanced, these veterans, with the steadiness of troops long accustomed to wrest victory from doubtful battle." The effect upon the French army of their moving is thus told by the Erckmann-Chatrian conscript:—"From all sides, over the thunder of cannon, over all the tumult, the cry was heard, 'The Guard is coming!' Yes, the Guard was coming at last! We could see them in the distance on the highway,

with their high bear-skin caps, advancing in good order. Those who have never witnessed the arrival of the Guard on the battlefield can never know the confidence which is inspired by a body of tried soldiers,—the kind of respect paid to courage and force. The soldiers of the Old Guard were nearly all old peasants, born before the Republic,—men five feet and six inches in height, thin and well-built, who had held the plough for convent and château; afterwards they were levied with all the rest of the people, and went to Germany, Holland, Italy, Egypt, Poland, Spain, and Russia, under Kleber, Hoche, and Marceau, and under Napoleon afterwards. He took special care of them and paid them liberally. They regarded themselves as proprietors of an immense farm, which they must defend and enlarge more and more. This gained them consideration; they were defending their own property. They no longer knew parents, relatives, or compatriots; they only knew the Emperor; he was their God. And lastly, they had adopted the King of Rome, who was to inherit all with them, and to support and honour them in their old age. Nothing like them was ever seen: they were so

French officer of cuirassiers, who rode up to Adam's brigade and surrendered himself, giving the information that Napoleon would himself attack the Allied line with the Imperial Guard in a quarter of an hour. The Duke had been engaged in perfecting his measures for receiving them when he was summoned to the centre to repair the disaster to the 3d division.²³⁶

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accustomed to march, to dress their lines, to load, and fire, and cross bayonets, that it was done mechanically in a measure, whenever there was a necessity. When they advanced, carrying arms, with their great caps, their white waistcoats and gaiters, they all looked just alike: you could plainly see that it was the right arm of the Emperor which was coming. When it was said in the ranks, 'The Guard is going to move,' it was as if they had said, 'The battle is gained.' . . . It was Ney who commanded them, as he had commanded the cuirassiers. The Emperor knew that nobody could lead them like Ney, only he should have ordered them up an hour sooner, when our cuirassiers were in the squares; then we should have gained all. But the Emperor looked upon his Guard as upon his own flesh and blood; . . . to have another such Guard, he must commence at twenty-five and gain fifty victories, and what remained of the best, most solid, and the toughest would be *The Guard*." = English eyes, naturally, were differently impressed by the Guard. "When I was at Fontainebleau in 1814," wrote B. R. Haydon, the artist, "I strolled one evening to the parade. More dreadful-looking fellows than Napoleon's Guard I had never seen. They had the look of thoroughbred, veteran,

disciplined banditti. Depravity, recklessness, and bloodthirstiness were burned into their faces. If such fellows had governed the world, what must have become of it? Black mustachios, gigantic bearskins, and a ferocious expression were their characteristics. They were tall and bony, but narrow-chested. On seeing our own men afterwards on the road from Bayonne to Boulogne, it was easy to predict which would have the best of it in a close struggle." = Of their leadership in their last charge, Charras says that, "under Ney's orders, marched the Lieutenant-Generals Friant, Roguet, Michel, and the Marshals of the Camp Poret de Morvan, Harlet, Mallet—a general to a battalion."

²³⁶ Sir Augustus Frazer thus relates the warning of the grand attack:—"His [Napoleon's] last attack . . . we were aware of: an officer of the Imperial cuirassiers, whether a deserter or not I could not determine, apprised me of it, pointing to the side on which he said the attack would be made in a quarter of an hour. It was necessary to find the Duke, from whom I had been for a little separated in assuring some guns which were about to be abandoned from a momentary want of ammunition; but, finding my friend Gen. Adam at the head of his brigade of infantry, I gave

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A cannonade, as usual, preceded the attack, but perceptibly less violent than heretofore, since on both sides the ammunition was becoming exhausted, and, especially on that of the Allies, many batteries had been disabled. But upon the track along which the Imperial Guard must advance the British artillery officers had concentrated the fire of a great number of guns, which swept this particular space with fatal precision. The French were obliged to withhold their artillery fire as their own columns advanced, until they should have descended sufficiently into the valley to be below its range; and during this interval the thunder of the Prussian guns on the east made itself heard so tremendously as greatly to endanger the *morale* of the charging columns. To prevent any wavering at this supreme moment, Napoleon—who was himself ordering the array of the Guard—sent aides-de-camp along the line to proclaim that the guns heard were Grouchy's, and that victory was now assured.²³⁷ Stimulated to fresh ardour by this

the cuirassier to him, and rode on to correct another mistake of the moment; and, before I could rejoin the Duke, Adam had reported the important information, so that the necessary dispositions were made."

²³⁷ "This useful falsehood," as Thiers terms it, deceived not only the men but their officers, even Ney himself. The alarm, according to Thiers, came from the attack of Zieten upon Durutte, which, if Thiers could ever be trusted as to matters of time, would settle the sequence of these disputed events (see note 232, page 349). His story is that "Napoleon was engaged in arranging them [the Guard] in columns of attack, . . . when he saw some of Durutte's troops abandon the Papelotte farm, at the cry of '*Sauve qui peut*,' uttered either by traitors or by those

who dreaded treachery. Napoleon rode to meet the fugitives, spoke to them, led them back to their post, and then returned to La Haye Sainte, when, looking towards the plateau, he perceived some movement among the cavalry, that had hitherto been quite immovable. A dark presentiment filled his mind," and, to cut the story short, he set going the Grouchy fabrication. Then, "having sent Labedoyère to disseminate this useful falsehood," he went back to the arrangement of his Guard. Scott is so far inclined to be charitable that, in his *Life of Napoleon*, he gives the story this turn:—"Buonaparte told the soldiers, and indeed imposed the same fiction on their commander, that the Prussians whom they saw on the right were retreating before

auspicious news, the entire front line, so far as it was not already in action, pressed forward to the final struggle. New accessions of numbers gave renewed vigour to the attacks upon Hougomont and before La Haye Sainte, and swarms of skirmishers crowded onward from end to end of the valley. The advance of the Guard was quickened by the spell of Napoleon's presence, for he stationed himself upon the central elevation beside the "hollow-way" of the Charleroi road, and by word or gesture addressed each battalion as it passed, stirring to the utmost the enthusiasm of this proud corps, and eliciting from them rapturous cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*"²³⁸ The right-hand column of the

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Grouchy. Perhaps he might himself believe that this was true."= The effect of Grouchy's reported arrival on the French lines is told by the Erckmann-Chatrian conscript:—"This terrible attack took place in the greatest confusion. Our whole army joined in it; all the remnant of the left wing and centre; all that was left of the cavalry, exhausted by six hours of fighting; every one who could stand or lift an arm. . . . When the news arrived that Grouchy was coming even the wounded rose up and took their places in the ranks. It seemed as if a breath had raised the dead, and all those poor fellows in the rear of La Haye Sainte, with their bandaged heads and arms and legs, with their clothes

in tatters and soaked with blood, every one who could put one foot before the other, joined the Guard when it passed before the breaches in the wall of the garden, and every one tore open his last cartridge."

²³⁸ A good deal has been said in the *Morituri salutamus* strain about this last march of the Guard before their idolized Emperor. Sentimentalists of the heroic turn, who prefer dramatic attitudinizing to common sense, have greatly deplored Napoleon's not heading the Guard himself and perishing with it. It is in this spirit that Scott, in the *Field of Waterloo*, closes his picture of the scene with a cheap and flip-pant taunt:—

"'On! on!' was still his stern exclaim,
'Confront the battery's jaws of flame!

Rush on the levell'd gun!
My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance!
Each Hulan forward with his lance!
My Guard—my chosen—charge for France,
France and Napoleon!'

Loud answer'd their acclaiming shout,
Greeting the mandate which sent out
Their bravest and their best to dare
The fate their leader shunn'd to share."

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Guard moved first to the attack, led by Ney. It advanced along the northern spur from the central elevation, directing its course against that portion of the Allied heights behind which Maitland's brigade of Guards were lying for shelter from the French cannonade; and it soon began to suffer severely from the Allied batteries, nearly all of which in the right wing were brought to bear upon it. Ney's horse (as usual) was shot, and the Marshal drew his sword and advanced on foot; Gen. Friant, commander of the grenadiers, fell severely wounded; Gen. Michel, of the chasseurs, was killed, and his fall caused a momentary delay and loss of order; but the column pressed on, though its numbers were rapidly diminishing, and presently drew so near the Allied position that the French fire against this point stopped. Wellington at this moment, returning from the lately endangered centre, rode up to Napier's battery at the right of Maitland's brigade, asked who commanded it, and said, "Tell him to keep a look-out to his left, for the French will soon be with him." Almost as he spoke the tall bear-skin caps began to appear above the brow of the heights; then the skirmishers mounted the slope and opened a sharp fire against the gunners; then Napier's guns gave a blast of canister, grape, and shrapnel, that scattered the skirmishers and wrought havoc in the column itself,

=To the Rev. Mr. Abbott it must have been a real grief that his ideal hero did not on this occasion launch into heroics; he tells how it happened otherwise, in these terms:—"The Emperor placed himself at the head of this devoted and invincible band, and advanced in front of the British lines, apparently intending himself to lead the charge. But the officers of his staff entreated him to

remember that the safety of France depended solely upon him. Yielding to their solicitations, he resigned the command to Ney." Mr. Abbott, however, finds consolation, such as it is, by telling how the Guard went on "to oppose their bare bosoms to point-blank discharges from batteries double-shotted or loaded to the muzzle with grape."

now only 40 to 50 yards distant. But the Guard came on, and its leading ranks gained the summit. "To the astonishment of the officers who were at their head, there appeared in their immediate front no direct impediment to their further advance. They could only distinguish dimly through the smoke extending from Napier's battery the cocked hats of a few mounted officers, little imagining, probably, that the most prominent of these was the great Duke himself. Pressing boldly forward, they had arrived within 50 paces of the spot on which the British Guards were lying down, when Wellington gave the talismanic call — 'Up, Guards: make ready!' and ordered Maitland to attack. It was a moment of thrilling excitement. The British Guards, springing up so suddenly in a most compact four-deep line, appeared to the French as if starting out of the ground. The latter, with their high bonnets, as they crowned the summit of the ridge, appeared to the British through the smoky haze like a corps of giants bearing down upon them. The British Guards instantly opened their fire with a tremendous volley, thrown in with so much coolness, deliberation, and precision, that the head of the column became as it were convulsed by the shock, and nearly the entire mass staggered under the effect. In less than a single minute more than 300 of these brave old warriors fell, to rise no more. But the high spirit and innate valour which actuated the mass were not to be subdued by a first repulse. Its officers, placing themselves conspicuously in its front and on its flanks, called aloud, waved their swords, and by encouraging words and gestures commenced a deployment in order to acquire a more extended front. But, the head of the column being continually shattered and driven back upon the mass by the well-sustained and rapidly-destructive fire by

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which it was assailed within so extremely limited a space, this attempt altogether failed. The front of the column was becoming momentarily more disordered and broken up; men were turning round and disappearing by the flanks; whilst others in the rear were firing over the heads of those before them. The confusion into which the French Guard had been thrown now became manifest. The Duke ordered Maitland to charge, whilst, at the same instant, the gallant Lord Saltoun, equally alive to the real situation of the column, called out, 'Now's the time, my boys!' The brigade sprang forward, with a loud cheer, to the charge. Numbers of the French Guard nearest to the British threw down their arms and knapsacks and dispersed. The flanks began rapidly to spread out; and then the mass, partaking more generally of the panic, appeared as if rent asunder by some invisible power."²³⁹ The broken column fell back and retired into the valley, pursued for some distance down the slope by Maitland's brigade and a portion of Sir C. Halkett's, on its left; but soon Maitland discovered the second column of the Imperial Guard approaching on his right in such a direction as to threaten to turn his flank, and he gave the order to face about and retire. In the midst of the tumult the order was imperfectly heard and was generally understood to be "Form square," with which some battalions began to comply, while the officers of others endeavoured to arrest the mistake, and disorder ensued; but the Guards, though in confusion, regained the height without mishap, re-formed promptly, and were in readiness for the new enemy approaching them.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ The quotation is from Siborne.

²⁴⁰ During this attack by the

first column of the Imperial Guard, Sir C. Halkett had led forward the two right-hand regiments of his bri-

The second column of the Imperial Guard did not move to the attack until some time after the advance of the first column—the interval between the two being from 10 to 12 minutes. This left-hand column had been formed in the hollow ground near the south-eastern angle of the Hougomont fields, and it marched alongside their eastern boundary-hedge until, on coming within the area of the Allied cannonade, it swerved to its right, either to gain the shelter of an undulation of the ground against the destroying fire, or to direct its attack against the same point in the Allied line at which the preceding column was then engaged. At the same time a body of French cuirassiers was pushed forward to silence the batteries on Maitland's right, which were cutting down the Guard, and it succeeded so far as to disperse the gunners of one battery and drive in the skirmishers of a part of Adam's brigade; but these horsemen were checked by the return of the 52d British regiment, in a formation to receive cavalry, to its old post before the main line, and they were over-

gade—the 33d and 69th—so as to cover Maitland's flank against any attack from Donzelot, then fiercely assailing Alten's division. This brought the brigade into a very exposed position, and it suffered accordingly, Halkett himself being shot through the mouth by a musket bullet, and obliged to leave the field, while all the commissioned officers of the 73d regiment fell except Major Kelly, then on Wellington's staff, who now left it to command his regiment. Col. Elphinstone, who succeeded Halkett in command of the brigade, got it into order just in time to receive another attack from Donzelot's columns, delivered as the second column of the Imperial Guard attacked Maitland. = D'Au-

bremé's brigade, of Chassé's Dutch-Belgian division, had stood on Maitland's right-rear during this charge, forming three squares, of two battalions each. There was no fighting within their sight, but the noise of the approach of the second column of the Imperial Guard so disquieted them that, when Maitland's troops in pursuing moved out of their front, they began to leave their ranks, and were only kept in the field by Vandeleur's closing up the squadron intervals of his cavalry brigade in their rear and holding them back. The Dutch-Belgian officers exerted themselves to restore order and confidence, but it was manifest that no fighting could be expected from the men.

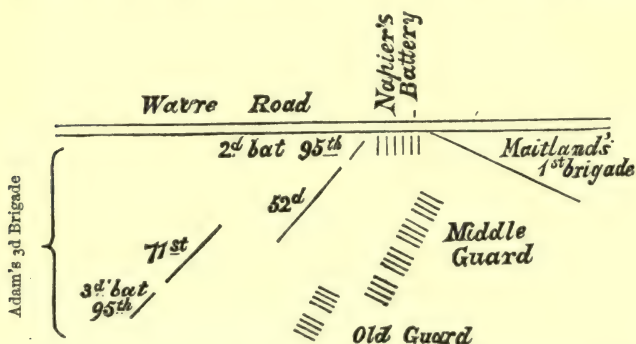
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come by a squadron of the 23d British light dragoons, which pursued them far across the plain and into the rear of the Guard, until it fell into the fire of a French infantry column and was forced to turn back. The second column of the Guard, meanwhile, had continued its advance with great spirit and in excellent order, covering its left front from the view of the British line by throwing out a great number of skirmishers. To oppose these, each battalion of Adam's brigade pushed out a company to act as skirmishers, and the brigade itself—following the inspiration of Sir John Colborne, the colonel commanding the 52d regiment—moved into a formation which would enable it to fall upon the Imperial Guard in flank when its front was in the act of attacking Maitland's Guards.²⁴¹ "The head of the

²⁴¹ To understand the conduct of Adam's brigade during the culminating struggle of the battle, we must remember the positions its

regiments had taken when brought into the first line (note 210, page 321), and which they had resumed on the threatening of this attack;



also the peculiar four-deep formation of the brigade (note 212, page 322). Colborne, afterwards Lord Seaton, was a man of mark in the British army—"peerless among all the brave men who led Wellington's battalions," Chesney describes him; and the discipline of his 52d regiment

was noted, and had won it great fame in the Peninsular war. Colborne had watched carefully the movements of the Imperial Guard, until he assured himself that it was about to advance diagonally in front of his own line: discerning his opportunity, he waited for no orders, but wheeled

French column had by this time nearly reached the brow of the ridge, its front covering almost the whole of Napier's battery and a portion of the extreme right of Maitland's brigade. It was still gallantly pressing forward, in defiance of the most galling fire poured into its front by the battery and by the British Guards, when the sudden and imposing appearance of the four-deep line of the 52d regiment bearing directly toward its left flank, in the most admirable and compact order imaginable, caused it to halt. In the next instant, wheeling up its left sections, it opened a rapid and destructive fire from the entire length of its left flank against the 52d regiment. Colborne, having brought his line parallel to the line of the Imperial Guard, also halted, and poured a deadly fire into the mass; and almost at the same moment the rifles of the 2d battalion 95th regiment, then coming up on the left, were levelled and discharged with unerring aim into the more advanced portion of the column. The 71st regiment was at this time rapidly advancing on the right to complete the brigade movement. Colborne, eager to carry out his projected flank attack upon the enemy's column, caused his men to cease firing, and then gave the command, 'Charge! charge!' It was answered by three

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his left company about one-eighth of a circle to its left, so as to bring its front nearly parallel with the flank of the coming column, and then formed the remainder of his regiment upon that company. Adam, riding up, asked Colborne what he was going to do, and Colborne answered, "To make that column feel our fire;" whereupon Adam galloped off to bring up the 71st regiment to conform with this new front. Wellington had just seen Maitland's brigade re-formed after its last charge, so as

to front the advancing Guard, and, riding to the right of Napier's battery, was sending orders to the troops on his right to attack the Imperial Guard, when the movement of the 52d showed him that his intentions had been anticipated, and he pushed forward the 2d battalion of the 95th regiment in continuation of the left of the 52d. This took part in the attack, but the 71st and 3d battalion of the 95th were not at the outset sufficiently advanced, and the work fell mainly on the 52d.

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hearty British cheers that rose distinctly above the shouts of ‘*Vive l’Empereur!*’ and the now straggling and unsteady fire from the column. The 2d battalion 95th regiment hastened to join in the charge on its right. The movement was remarkable for the order, the steadiness, the resoluteness, and the daring by which it was characterized. The column of the Imperial Guard, which already seemed to reel to and fro under the effect of the front and flank fire which had been so successfully brought to bear upon it, was evidently in consternation as it beheld the close advance of Adam’s brigade. Some daring spirits—and it contained many within its ranks—still endeavoured to make at least a show of resistance; but the disorder, which had been rapidly increasing, now became uncontrollable; and this second column of the Imperial Guard, breaking into the wildest confusion, shared the fate of the first—with this difference, however, that in consequence of the combined front and flank fire in which it had been so fatally involved, and of the unrestrained pursuit which deprived it of the power of rallying its component parts, it became so thoroughly disjointed and dispersed that, with the exception of the two rear battalions, which constituted the 1st regiment of chasseurs (Old Guard), it is extremely doubtful whether any portion of it ever re-united as a regularly formed military body during the brief remaining period of the battle—certainly not on the Allied side of La Belle Alliance, toward which point it directed its retreat.”²⁴² As to

²⁴² Siborne, from whom the account of the repulse of the Guard is quoted, comments further upon it as follows: “Troops could scarcely be placed in a more critical situation than was this second attacking column of the Imperial Guard from

the moment it came to a halt. With its front immediately facing a battery within 60 or 70 yards distance, the double-shotted guns of which continued ploughing through the mass and tearing up its ranks; with its left flank faced outwards to repel a

the two battalions of the Old Guard,—which were commanded by Gen. Cambronne, and owed their immunity

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formidable attack on that side, and its right flank exposed to the oblique fire of the greater portion of the line of British Guards, the interior of the mass enveloped in smoke, feeling a pressure from both front and flank, and yet perceiving no indication of the means of extricating itself from so perilous a position, it was truly a most trying moment even to such veteran warriors as those who constituted the renowned Imperial Guard of France. Any attempt at deployment to its right while thus attacked on its left was of course out of the question. Had it continued to advance until Adam's brigade had approached quite close to its left flank, the charge of the latter must have brought it to a stand and rendered the efforts of the head of the column abortive. If, on the other hand, after having faced altogether to the left and converted that flank into a compact line, it had advanced to meet the 52d regiment when it first became aware of this attack, it would have still been exposed on the right (its previous front) to the havoc created by Napier's guns, as also to a charge by Maitland's brigade, which, by bringing forward its left shoulder, might have rendered the situation of the column so hopeless as probably to have led to its immediate and unqualified surrender on the spot. The dilemma into which these veterans were thus thrown was mainly attributable to the fatal neglect of not accompanying the column with an effective support of cavalry. A strong body of the latter on each flank, or in its immediate rear, would have secured the column from any

such flank attack as that which so successfully arrested its progress and so completely effected its dispersion."

= A controversy has arisen about this repulse between those, on the one hand, who claim that the 52d regiment alone and unaided stopped and routed the Imperial Guard, and those who hold that Maitland's Guards had a greater or less share in the honour. Chesney examines the evidence carefully, and reaches a conclusion in accordance with Sirborne's story quoted above. In reference to the defeat of the Guard he quotes from the previously unpublished *Journal* of Sir Henry Clinton, the commander of the 3d division, which included Adam's brigade, the following entry, made on the night of the battle:—"About 7 P.M. the enemy appeared to be decidedly beaten, and our artillery was nearly exhausted; but finding the Prussians, whose attack on his right commenced at about 5½ o'clock, to be gaining ground, and unable to make a good retreat in the presence of two armies which had been successful, Buonaparte determined to make one great effort to compel the Duke of Wellington to retire. For this object he brought forward his Imperial Guards and reinforced all his batteries, which he advanced and began his attack with. The weight of this was directed against the brigade of Guards. It was steadily received and repulsed, and the enemy was followed up by the brigade of Gen. Adam, supported by the Osna-brück battalion, the Legion, 23d regiment, etc. We had no sooner gained the Genappe [Charleroi] road

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from the ruin that had overtaken the rest of the column to the inability of Adam's right-hand battalions to get up in time to join in the 52d's attack,—they retired in the direction of La Belle Alliance until they were overtaken and disordered by Col. Hew Halkett, who pursued them with a battalion of Hanoverians. The wreck of the broken battalions of the Middle Guard had been impelled by the charge of the 52d in a direction that soon brought it in contact with the rear of Donzelot's columns, which had hitherto continued their attack upon Alten's division with unrelenting severity; but now they caught the panic from the flying Guard; their attack hesitated, slackened, ended; and they broke into the general flight which—set in motion thus at La Haye Sainte, and at the same time by Zieten's onset at

than the enemy abandoned everything and took to his heels; but as there was still a large body of cavalry, I kept the Legion and 23d regiment in reserve, and continued to advance. In the road I met with some Prussians, who had the same success on their side." The final sentence incidentally goes to show that Zieten's success over Durutte must have been at least as early as the defeat of the Imperial Guard. Charras urges a most surprising claim to the honour of repulsing the Guard—his clients being the Dutch-Belgians! "A Dutchman," he says, "a soldier formed and brought up in our [the French] ranks, but faithful to the flag of his country, Chassé seized the moment, and, at the head of a demi-brigade in close column, charged the left of the Guard with levelled bayonets: Wellington pushed forward Maitland's brigade. Fired upon with grape and musketry, reduced to 1,500 or 1,600 men, the

Guard recedes, under the pressure of numbers; but it withdraws fighting, slowly, in good order, and unbroken." The authority Charras cites for this is Chassé himself, in a letter to Lord Hill (July 5, 1815). Siborne's account of the manner in which Chassé's troops were comporting themselves just before this juncture has been given in note 240, page 363, *ad finem*; and that of their exploits just after appears in a later note (245, page 373). = It is to this time in the battle that there has been attached by popular consent the episode which Alison, following Scott, who probably followed Lacoste, tells thus: "Napoleon . . . preserved his calm demeanour till the Old Guard recoiled in disorder, with the British cavalry mingled with their bayonets. He then became as pale as death, and observed to the guide, '*Ils sont mêlés ensemble*,' and retired toward the rear of the field.

Papelotte—communicated itself as if electrically through the whole length of D'Erlon's corps. Almost instantaneously, from end to end of the front line, their infuriated attack was transformed into a tumultuous rout, and the cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" into those of "*Sauve qui peut!*" Except at the two extremes, Hougomont and Planchenoit,—where the combatants were too much engrossed in their own desperate struggle to know what went on outside,—the sole remaining point of cohesion in the front of the battle was about Napoleon himself. He had rallied with wonderful rapidity the 4 battalions of the Guard of the column first overthrown, had formed them into three squares on the central elevation west of the "hollow-way" of the Charleroi road, and now made his last effort to stem the tide of disaster.

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There was no delay in the pursuit of the defeated Guard. Adam's brigade pressed on instantly in the track of their flight, and a moment later Vivian's hussars were in motion to charge the enemy directly in front. Colborne—who seems to have cared little about waiting for orders, and to have taken the initiative in a manner ventured upon by very few among Wellington's officers—never paused in his victorious charge; but—followed shortly by the rest of the 3d British brigade, and by Hew Halkett with the Osnabrück Landwehr battalion of his 3d Hanoverian brigade—continued advancing toward the Charleroi road in a course which led him diagonally in front of Maitland's and Alten's divisions, and so close to La Haye Sainte that the battalion of the 95th on the left of his line was crowded into its orchard.²⁴³ Sweeping before it the vestiges of

²⁴³ The independent course of Colborne, both in his original attack upon the Imperial Guard and his unhesitating pursuit of his advantage—all entirely on his own responsibility—cannot be too much insisted

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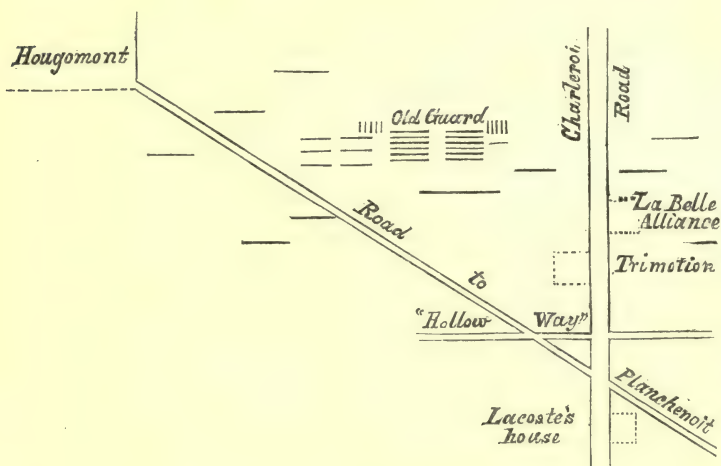
the Guard and crowds of Donzelot's soldiery, all hustling one another and throwing away their arms in their eagerness to escape the English, the 52d came on until near the Charleroi road; and then, seeing the three formed battalions which Napoleon had rallied on the central elevation, it brought forward its left shoulder until its front was parallel with theirs, moved on near to them, and halted in their front. = Vivian had led his hussar brigade forward almost as soon as Adam's infantry was in motion. Leaving the Anglo-Allied line from the right of Maitland's brigade, he took a direction parallel to the Charleroi road—riding himself at the head of the 10th hussars, the 18th following, and then the 1st hussars of the German Legion, while but a little distance in rear of Vivian's brigade came Dörnberg's 2d light dragoons of the German Legion. As the horsemen passed the brow of the slope they rode into the cloud of smoke yet remain-

upon as a thing wholly at variance with the usual mode of procedure in Wellington's army. Kennedy considers this achievement so far decisive of the course of the battle, that his narrative follows the march of the 52d regiment continuously until the close of the day, grafting upon it the other incidents of the action. "It is perhaps impossible," he says, "to point out in history any other instance in which so small a force as that with which Colborne acted had so powerful an influence on the result of a great battle in which the numbers engaged on each side were so large." = The order in which the regiments of Adam's brigade marched in this pursuit was as shown in the diagram in note 241, page 364; but, still in the right rear of the 3d battalion 95th should be added Hew Halkett's Osnabrück battalion. Adam, when

advancing the remainder of his brigade to follow Colborne's lead, desired the support of other troops to cover his right flank against the probable attacks of French cavalry; and Halkett, seeing what was needed, purposed following with his whole brigade, but his other battalions were back of Hougomont, and the messenger who went to summon them was killed by the way; so Halkett advanced with but one battalion. This was so drawn up as to be able to form square if attacked by cavalry, while the regiments of Adam's brigade preserved their four-deep formation. Halkett's battalion, however, soon got drawn off into an independent pursuit of its own, and had an erratic experience for the remainder of the day and during the following night.

ing from the action with the Imperial Guard. Presently they were able to discern before them disordered infantry columns and crowds of stragglers pouring on in retreat; and it was not until they were well advanced toward the French position that they could see directly ahead formed bodies of troops evidently awaiting their attack. These consisted of two infantry squares,—the two battalions of the 1st grenadiers of the Old Guard which had been left in reserve for the protection of the Imperial headquarters,—with cavalry and artillery on

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both flanks, the whole posted on the rising ground between the south-eastern angle of Hougomont and La Belle Alliance.²⁴⁴ Vivian was moving on to charge,

²⁴⁴ In the diagram the positions of the two squares of the 1st regiment of grenadiers of the Old Guard are shown very nearly where they made their stand against the onset of the Allied cavalry. The disposition of the artillery on the flanks of the squares is probably fairly correct, and that of the lines of cavalry on either flank and in rear only ap-

proximately so. The cavalry line on the French left front was a body of lancers of the Guard, and was drawn up on the brow of the rising ground. The other cavalry on the left of the squares were dragoons and carbineers of the Guard. Those in rear and on the right of the squares were the remnants of the various cavalry corps which had

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intending to turn the left of the French force, when he was overtaken by Sir Colin Campbell with a message from Wellington that he was not to engage unless confident of success; but Vivian argued the importance of dispersing the French cavalry before it could attack the advancing Allied infantry, and Campbell, agreeing with him, returned to the Duke. Vivian now left his two rear regiments in support, and led the 10th, obliquely to their right as they advanced, against the left of the French line, a body of lancers which stood before the rest; his advance was obstructed by a squadron of cuirassiers, who were beaten off; he was overtaken by Dörnberg's 2d light dragoons, which came up on his right, and were charged by the lancers, who rode down the hill upon them; but Vivian's light squadron came upon the flank of the lancers when they were in the act of closing with the light dragoons and scattered them; the centre squadron of the 10th cut into some French heavy dragoons who followed in support of the lancers, and drove them before them; while the left squadron, continuing its course, completed the work of the charge by putting to flight the remainder of the French cavalry on the (French) left of the squares. The right and part of the centre squadron of the 10th, under its colonel, Lord Robert Manners, joined the 2d light dragoons in a pursuit of the French horsemen that led them far into the valley south-east

been destroyed in the previous charges — squadrons representing what had been entire regiments or brigades. Their strength cannot be stated even approximately. Thiers says indeed, "Of the entire cavalry of the Guard he [Napoleon] has but 400 chasseurs to oppose to 3,000 of the enemy;" but the combined strength of Vivian's and Vandeleur's

brigades was but 2,256 in the morning, and the French mustered lancers, cuirassiers, and several other varieties of cavalry besides chasseurs. Probably the numbers of French and Allied cavalry were not greatly different; but the British regiments which now came into action were comparatively fresh, the French exhausted by frequent charges.

of Hougomont. Vivian, ordering the halt and re-forming of the remainder of the regiment where it was, returned quickly to bring up the 18th hussars to continue the work so well begun. He was attacked on the way by a French cuirassier, and, as his right arm was in a sling from an old wound, could only defend himself with his left hand; but with it he contrived to thrust his sabre into the Frenchman's neck just as his German orderly rode up and cut him off his horse.

The Duke of Wellington, standing by Maitland's Guards, had noted the entire and almost simultaneous success of Colborne's advance on his left and Vivian's in his front.²⁴⁵ A general survey of the field showed him that the time of defensive action had passed; that the last reserves of the French army were giving way before Colborne, Halkett, and Vivian; that D'Erlon's columns were breaking; that the Prussians were pressing their attack both at Papelotte and at Planchenoit; that but little pressure was needed to cause the collapse of the enemy's entire front line, since his centre was pierced and the inner flank of each of his wings turned. He gave the long-desired order for a general advance

²⁴⁵ Wellington's first thought, as Adam's and Vivian's brigades advanced, was to bring up other troops to fill the vacancy in the line, and he turned toward the nearest of Chassé's division. "But what a spectacle met his view!" says Siborne, semi-pathetically. "The 3 Dutch-Belgian squares into which D'Aubremé's brigade had been turned, and whose unsteadiness . . . had greatly augmented as the fighting and shouting on the exterior slope of the ridge, of which they could see nothing, became more continuous and intense, were now in a state bordering on dissolution.

The faces of the squares were already broken at intervals by groups in the act of abandoning their ranks, whilst several officers of Vandeleur's brigade . . . drawn up in their rear were zealously exerting themselves in endeavouring to induce these troops to stand fast. The Duke, observing this, called out, 'That's right; tell them the French are retiring.' This intelligence, quickly caught up and spread throughout their ranks, had the desired effect of reducing them to order. They shortly afterwards formed into columns, and advanced to the front line."

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of the whole Anglo-Allied line, and himself galloped to Adam's brigade, where especially the French retreat was to be pushed.²⁴⁶ The entire line moved forward in what

²⁴⁶ There is something almost ludicrous in the enthusiasm with which the school of English writers of whom Siborne is a type expatiate upon Wellington's ordering this advance. Even Chesney, usually the most sober of narrators, twice over attributes it to "the instinct of genius." In fact, the order to advance, so far from manifesting extraordinary prescience, was perfectly obvious, and had already been determined by the course of events; and the person entitled to the credit of discovering the right moment and acting upon it was not Wellington, but Colborne, who had already led the advance, and without orders, doing what was needed as a matter of course. Wellington undoubtedly did the proper thing at the proper time, but the example had been set him by Colborne; and the Duke showed his gratitude by ignoring in his despatches the splendid and decisive services of Colborne and his regiment, and refusing to repair the omission when it was pointed out to him. = Another portion of the army which had cause to complain of the Duke's neglect was the artillery. Sir Augustus Frazer, commander of the horse-artillery, had succeeded in getting his troops equipped with 9-pounder guns instead of the 6-pounders which they had used in previous campaigns—a substitution which Wellington opposed. The execution done by the heavier arm, especially at the time of the great cavalry charges, was most effective, and no doubt Frazer was quite

within bounds when he wrote (June 20), "Had the troops continued with light guns, I do not hesitate to say the day had been lost." But when the Duke's despatches found their way back to the army, Frazer looked vainly for any recognition, and wrote thus (July 6) to one of his family:—"The Duke *might* have mentioned the horse-artillery, which really was of essential service. But my . . . account of the affair of the 18th June, sent to your lady, will have told more than all which need be said on the subject. *Requiescat in pace.*" The tone of smothered vexation meant much in the case of a man like Frazer, who had followed Wellington through the Peninsular War, and adored him as a species of demigod. = One more quotation may conclude these references to Wellington's scant acknowledgment of others' services. It is from Greville's *Memoirs* (June 24, 1821), and gives the substance of a conversation with the Duke of York, second son of George III.: "His [York's] prejudice against him [Wellington] is excessively strong, and I think if ever he becomes King the other will not be Commander-in-Chief. He does not deny his military talents, but he thinks that he is false and ungrateful, that he never gave sufficient credit to his officers, and that he was unwilling to put forward men of talent who might be in a situation to claim some show of credit, the whole of which he was desirous of engrossing himself. He

Siborne calls "a march of triumph, not of attack, since all fled before its approach." On the extreme Allied right

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says that at Waterloo he got into a scrape and avowed himself to be surprised, and he attributes in great measure the success of that day to Lord Anglesea [Uxbridge], who, he says, was hardly mentioned, and that in the coldest terms, in the Duke's despatch." The Duke of York, it should be stated, had a personal resentment toward Wellington because the latter had been made commander of the Peninsular army when he craved that honour for himself. = The important thing to note about the general advance of the Allied line is that it commenced, as Siborne fixes the time, not less than twelve minutes after the defeat of the Imperial Guard—an interval during which the first charges of Colborne and Vivian had been made, and probably also Zieten's pursuit of Durutte. It is to this period of hurry and turmoil that we must assign the stories of Ney's bravery during the defeat and flight of the Guard. Thiers says:—"Ney put a worthy termination to this day, which God had granted him to expiate his faults, by a display of unexampled heroism. He was the last that descended from the plateau of Mont St. Jean, and in his route he met with what were left of Durutte's division, beating a retreat. The noble remnant of this division, consisting of some hundreds of men of the 95th, under Rulhière, the commander of the battalion, was now retreating under arms. General Durutte had advanced some steps to seek a road, when Ney, bareheaded, his broken sword in his hand, and

his clothes torn, seeing a handful of armed men, ran forward to lead them against the enemy. 'Come, my friends,' he said, 'come and see how a Marshal of France can die!' These brave men, excited by his very appearance, wheeled round and rushed in despair on the Prussian column that was pursuing them. They slaughtered numbers, but were soon overpowered, and scarcely 200 escaped death. Rulhière, who commanded the battalion, broke the flag-staff, hid the eagle beneath his coat, and followed Ney, who was now unhorsed for the fifth time, but still unwounded. The illustrious Marshal retired on foot until a subaltern cavalry officer gave him his horse, and then proceeded to join the main body of the army, sheltered by the darkness, which at length hung like a funeral pall over the battlefield on which 60,000 French, English, and Prussians were lying dead or wounded." = Victor Hugo's picture invests Ney's valour with the same features of theatrical egotism as Thiers. "The Imperial Guard felt in the darkness the army giving way around them, and the vast staggering of the rout. . . . Ney, wild and grand in the consciousness of accepted death, offered himself to every blow in this combat. He had his fifth horse killed under him here. Bathed in perspiration, with a flame in his eye and foam on his lips, his uniform unbuttoned, one of his epaulettes half cut through by the sabre-cut of a horse-guard, and his decoration of the great eagle dinted by a bullet—bleeding, muddy, magnifi-

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Mitchell's troops found themselves unopposed, for Piré's lancers had been ordered to the rear of La Belle Alliance

cent, and holding a broken sword in his hand, he shouted, 'Come and see how a Marshal of France dies on the battlefield!' But it was in vain; he did not die. He was haggard and indignant, and hurled at Drouet d'Erlon the question, 'Are you not going to get yourself killed?' He yelled amid the roar of all this artillery crushing a handful of men, 'Oh! there is nothing for me! I should like all these English cannon balls to enter my chest!' You were reserved for French bullets, unfortunate man. = The rout in the rear of the Guard was mournful: the army suddenly gave way on all sides simultaneously at Hougomont, La Haye Sainte, Papelotte, and Planchenoit. The cry of 'Treachery' was followed by that of '*Sauve qui peut!*' An army which disbands is like a thaw: all gives way, cracks, floats, rolls, falls, comes into collision, and dashes forward. Ney borrows a horse, leaps on it, and, without hat, stock, or sword, dashes across the Brussels road, stopping at once English and French. He tries to hold back the army, he recalls it, he insults it, he clings wildly to the rout to hold it back. The soldiers fly from him, shouting 'Long live Marshal Ney!' Two regiments of Durutte's move backward and forward in terror, and, as it were, tossed between the sabres of the hussars and the musketry fire of Kempt's, Best's, and Pack's brigades. A rout is the highest of all confusions, for friends kill each other in order to escape, and squadrons and battalions dash against and destroy

each other. Lobau at one extremity and Reille at the other are carried away by the torrent. In vain does Napoleon build a wall of what is left of the Guard; in vain does he expend his own special squadrons in a final effort. Quiot retires before Vivian, Kellermann before Vandeleur, Lobau before Bülow, Morand before Pirch, and Domont and Subervie before Prince William of Prussia. Guyot, who led the Emperor's squadrons to the charge, falls beneath the horses of the English dragoons. Napoleon gallops along the line of fugitives, harangues, urges, threatens, and implores them; all the mouths that shouted '*Vive l'Empereur!*' in the morning remained wide open: they hardly knew him. The Prussian cavalry, who had come up fresh, dash forward, cut down, kill, and exterminate. The artillery horses dash onward with the guns; the train soldiers unharness the horses from the caissons and escape on them; wagons, overthrown and with their four wheels in the air, block up the road, and supply opportunities for massacre. Men crush each other, and trample over the dead and over the living. A multitude wild with terror fill the roads, the paths, the bridges, the plains, the hills, the valleys, and the woods, which are thronged by this flight of 40,000 men. Cries, desperation; knapsacks and muskets cast into the wheat; passages cut with the edge of the sabres; no comrades, no officers, no generals recognised—an indescribable terror. Zieten sabring France at his ease. The lions be-

to cover the French retreat ;—the brigades next on the left poured into Hougomont and ejected its assailants, who were fighting on, ignorant of the defeat outside ;—Vandeleur's light cavalry brigade moved directly forward to support Vivian in his attack upon the two squares of the Old Guard and the horsemen and batteries grouped about them ;—the 1st and 3d divisions, with the miscellaneous corps interspersed among them, advanced to sweep the valley clear of enemies ;—Lambert's brigade, with part of Pack's, occupied La Haye Sainte, where they found only dead French and Germans and wounded French ;—and the troops of the left wing joined Steinmetz's infantry in driving Alix's, Marcognet's, Durutte's, and Lobau's men toward the Charleroi road, while the Prussian cavalry pressed before them, eager to reach the front of the pursuit.=It was to Adam's brigade, however, that the duty fell of opening the way for this triumphant advance through the centre of the field—as Halkett, and beyond him Vivian, now supported by Vandeleur, were doing on the right. As soon as Wellington had ordered the forward movement of his line he galloped up to Adam where he stood confronting the three rallied squares of the Guard drawn up upon the central elevation, and ordered him to attack them. The brigade had become somewhat disordered by its hasty advance over the valley heavy with much-trodden mud and encum-

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come kids. Such was this flight.”=Charras—who also puts into Ney's mouth the bombastic saying already twice quoted—gives this account of his departure from the field :—“Ney, bruised, battered, exhausted, limping painfully over the muddy ground, without an officer, without an orderly, received succour from an unknown man, a soldier, who served

as his support in his fatigue, and quitted him only when other devotion brought him a new and surer aid. Near Genappe, Major Schmidt, of Lefebvre-Desnouettes's division, dismounted before the hero of Moskowa, hoisted him upon his horse, and assured the safety of his chief at the risk of his own life.”

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bered with the bodies of dead and wounded, and especially from having been obliged to detach a section to silence some French guns on its right flank that enfiladed it during the movement; and there was a delay of some minutes in re-forming it. At this moment Sir Colin Campbell rode up to inform Wellington that Vivian was about attacking the French reserves near La Belle Alliance, and Uxbridge, who had just joined the Duke, was turning to ride to the point of action and direct the cavalry operations, when a grape-shot struck his right knee and fractured his leg, and he was carried from the field,²⁴⁷—the command of the cavalry thus devolving upon Vandeleur. The Duke, meantime, had become impatient at the delay in forming the brigade; he observed the bearing of the squares of the Guard, and said, "They won't stand—better attack them—go on, Colborne, go on!" The 52d accordingly ascended the hill, receiving as it did so a heavy fire from the front and flank of the squares; but, without hesitating, it advanced to the charge, and the Guard, at a word of command, ceased firing, faced

²⁴⁷ Lord Uxbridge, after seeing off Vivian's brigade upon its charge, had exchanged his tired horse for a fresh one and followed Wellington to the front, when he was hurt as above described. According to Alison, the shot came from one of four guns at the rear of the field, which were discharged by Napoleon's direction the last thing before he betook himself to flight. Uxbridge was carried to a public-house in Waterloo, where the injured leg was amputated; and he is said to have reassured his friends, who stood by during the operation, by observing, "Who would not lose a leg for such a victory?" The loss was more ex-

plicitly requited by the title of Marquis of Anglesey, bestowed upon him by the Prince Regent (George IV.) in acknowledgment of his distinguished services. As to the leg, Southey records in a note to *The Poet's Pilgrimage* that "the owner of the house in which the amputation was performed considers it as a relic which has fallen to his share." He had it decorously enclosed in a coffin and buried in his garden under a mound of earth, upon which he purposed planting a weeping willow; and Southey transcribes a glorificatory epitaph upon the leg which the lapidary was transferring to stone at the time of "the Poet's" visit to Waterloo.

about, and commenced a retreat. While Wellington—after seeing an end made of this attempt to bear back against the Allied advance—rode onward toward his right front to observe Vivian's part in the fight,²⁴⁸

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²⁴⁸ Wellington, during this attack upon the squares, was in the thick of a hot musketry fire, and Sir Colin Campbell, warned probably by the fate of Lord Uxbridge, said to him, "This is no place for you—you had better move;" and the Duke replied, "I will, when I see those fellows off." Presently he was again warned by Col. Harvey that he was riding into dangerous ground, and answered—so the story runs,—“Never mind; let them fire away: the battle's won, and my life is of no consequence now.” Within a few moments of his leaving Adam's brigade he was

seen riding in the very front of the pursuit, with but a single member of his staff left beside him. Of those who began the day with him, Sir William De Lancey, Quartermaster-General, fell wounded, but lived long enough to see his newly-married wife before his death; Col. Canning was killed outright; Col. Gordon lived only to learn that the battle was won; and Lord Fitzroy Somerset—the Lord Raglan of the Crimean war—lost his arm by one of the last shots fired. To some of these Scott pays homage in the *Field of Waterloo*:—

“Period of honour as of woes,
What bright careers 'twas thine to close!—
Mark'd on thy roll of blood what names
To Briton's memory, and to Fame's,
Laid then their last immortal claims!
Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
Redoubted Picton's soul of fire—
Saw'st in the mangled carnage lie
All that of Ponsonby could die—
De Lancey change Love's bridal-wreath
For laurels from the hand of Death—
And generous Gordon, 'mid the strife,
Fall while he watch'd his leader's life.—
Ah! though her guardian angel's shield
Fenced Britain's hero through the field,
Fate not the less her power made known,
Through his friends' hearts to pierce his own!”

The closing lines doubtless were suggested by Wellington's deep feeling, manifested in many ways, at the losses incurred by the victory. In writing to the Earl of Aberdeen, for instance, to announce to him the

death of his brother, Sir Alexander Gordon, the Duke said: “I cannot express to you the regret and sorrow with which I look round me and contemplate the loss which I have sustained, particularly in your bro-

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Colborne led the 52d regiment across the Charleroi road and continued his advance upon La Belle Alliance

ther. The glory resulting from such actions, so dearly bought, is no consolation to me, and I cannot suggest it as any to you and his friends." = The mishap of Lord Fitzroy Somerset is related at length by a writer on that General's career in the *Quarterly Review* (January 1857) as follows:—

"Lord Fitzroy wrote a few lines in pencil to his wife to tell her the battle was ended and that he was *safe*. They were the last words he ever penned with his right hand. He was riding slowly, with the Duke and General Alava, from the bloody field, when a stray shot shattered his elbow. He refused to dismount, and continued riding till he reached the quarters of the Duke in the village of Waterloo. Here he was taken into the room where the gallant Alexander Gordon lay dying, and the Prince of Orangelay wounded. The Prince used to recount that not a word announced the entrance of the patient, nor was he conscious of his presence till he heard him call out, in his usual tone, 'Hallo! don't carry away that arm till I have taken off my ring!' Not a groan, not a sigh, not a remark had been extorted either by the wound or the operation. The ring, which had occupied more of his thoughts than the pain, was the gift of his wife, and in the midst of his sufferings his whole consideration was for her. He insisted upon removing to Brussels that night, that he might be on the spot when she returned on the following morning from Antwerp, and this affectionate fortitude

had nearly cost him his life. The blood burst from one of the vessels of his stump, and he would have bled to death, except for the happy circumstance that a medical man was in the vehicle, and kept his finger pressed upon the artery the whole of the journey. The surgeon who cut off the arm had tied a nerve in his haste, and the constant suffering obliged Lord Fitzroy, after his return to England, to undergo a second operation, which he said was more painful than [the first.—If the earliest thought of Lord Fitzroy was for his wife, the Duke well knew that his second would be the apprehension that he could no longer retain the office of Military Secretary. The name of Colonel Felton Harvey is associated with a noble instance of humane gallantry on the part of a French officer, who was about to cut him down on the field of Salamanca, when, perceiving that his foe had lost his right arm, he turned the uplifted sword into a military salute and rode rapidly away. The day after the battle of Waterloo the Duke called upon Lord Fitzroy, and, after leaving his room, told Lady Fitzroy's mother that he had appointed this Colonel Harvey to be his temporary secretary. The exquisite delicacy of nominating a substitute who had only one arm, and that the left, was no less appreciated by Lord Fitzroy than the intimation it was intended to convey was instantly understood. Upon hearing the circumstance, he immediately remarked that the sole thing which had weighed upon his mind

and Trimotion, while the remainder of Adam's brigade, flanked on its right by Halkett's Osnabrück battalion, kept pace with him along the western side of the high-road. As the brigade swept on right down the centre of the field, its broad front clearing all before it, its progress was disputed by a body of cuirassiers which had been in support of the squares and now threatened to charge; but the line, secure in its four-deep formation, lowered its bayonets, and the cuirassiers, receding, joined the retiring mass. On reaching the higher ground about La Belle Alliance, the brigade found its front more and more obstructed by the crowds of every description of troops, fugitives and pursuers, which thronged in upon its left from the scenes of Zieten's and Bülow's successes, all making for the single avenue of escape that was now becoming densely packed; and presently its left came within the line of fire from Bülow's guns, still busily plied both against the last of Lobau's corps and the defenders of Planchenoit—a fire which

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was the fear that the Duke would think him incompetent to fill his former post.—The loss of his arm brought prominently into view a remarkable characteristic of Lord Fitzroy, which would speedily have removed any doubts which could have been entertained of his continued ability to perform the duties of Secretary. He never permitted himself to be vanquished by a difficulty which it was possible to overcome. The morning after the amputation he began to practise writing with his left hand, and shortly became the same unusually rapid penman which he had been before. Nay, what is a striking example of the power of perseverance, he wrote better with

his left hand than he had ever done with his right, and in a character so free and flowing that no one could have suspected his loss."=The instance of "exquisite delicacy," as the reviewer very justly terms it, goes far to compensate for the Duke's habitual demeanour toward his subordinates, military and civil. He seems to have employed a boorish curttness of address until British officers came to account it a gratification even to have been snubbed by "his Grace"—a performance in which much practice made him proficient, and which helped to render him one of the most unlovely of military heroes.

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Prussian infantry, as soon as the presence of the British troops in that part of the field was made known to Blücher. At the back of La Belle Alliance, where the Charleroi road is crossed by the narrow road leading to Planchenoit, and forming a "hollow-way" through the rising ground, Adam's brigade had one more conflict with the enemy. The 52d came suddenly upon a column of French infantry and artillery hastily retreating up the sunken road and unaware that an enemy was near: caught at this disadvantage, the infantry hesitated, offered a faltering show of resistance, broke and scattered; the artillery made a dash to scramble up the opposite bank; but the fire of Colborne's men brought down some of the horses of each gun, and after a few individual collisions the guns were abandoned. On the right of the brigade at the same time the 71st regiment took a battery of the Imperial Guard, which its artillerymen were endeavouring to withdraw; and, causing one of the guns to be turned against the retiring squares of the Guard, a British officer had what was considered the honour of firing into them the last shot of the day.²⁴⁹ At this point Adam's brigade be-

²⁴⁹ This act of wanton and cowardly brutality is told as simple matter of fact by Siborne in one of those highly complicated sentences which so frequently reduce the student of his pages to bewilderment:—"The 71st regiment having gained the height on which a reserve battery of the Imperial Guard had been posted the entire day, and had just made an attempt to draw off into the highroad, was captured by that corps; when some men of the right flank company of the latter (Captain Reed's) under Lieut. Torriano, immediately turned round one

of the guns, which was then discharged into the retiring columns of the Imperial Guard by Capt. Campbell, aide-de-camp to Major-General Adam, and was, there is reason to believe, the last French gun fired on that day." Sir Walter Scott, in *Paul's Letters*, distinctly recognises the firing of cannon into a no longer resisting enemy as an honour: "The last gun fired," he says, "was a howitzer, which the French had left upon the road. It was turned upon their retreat, and discharged by Capt. Campbell, aide-de-camp to Gen. Adam, with his own hand, who had

came merged in the general aggregation of troops of every kind, and coming from every quarter, which thronged the neighbourhood of the Charleroi road from La Belle Alliance to Rossome, and its individual achievements were at an end. = Col. Hew Halkett had originally led forward the Osnabrück battalion of his Hanoverian brigade for the purpose of covering the right flank of Adam's advancing line. Soon, however, he became engrossed in the pursuit of the French troops immediately before him—the two battalions of the 1st regiment of chasseurs of the Old Guard, commanded by Gen. Cambronne, which had escaped the overthrow of the rest of the second attacking column of the Imperial Guard; and in following these the Osnabrück battalion diverged from the route taken by Adam's brigade, marching directly toward La Belle Alliance, so that the battalion passed close to the spot where Vivian was attacking the French reserves at about the time Adam was driving the three squares of the Guard from their stand at the central elevation beside the Charleroi road. Napoleon, at the time of the general break of his front line, threw himself for shelter into the square formed by Cambronne's 2d battalion, and it thus became the duty of these veterans to bear their Emperor safely from the field and avoid useless conflict by the way. Halkett, however, continued to press the battalions closely as they retreated, while Cambronne and two other officers rode in the rear of their retiring ranks, exerting themselves to preserve their formation. Halkett's attention was drawn to Cambronne by the

thus the honour of concluding the Battle of Waterloo, which, it has been said, Bonaparte himself commenced."

= It is possible that it is this miserable performance which—growing like the fall of the cuirassiers into the

sand-pit—has furnished the grand catastrophe of the Napoleonic legend, that extermination of the Guard by artillery which Victor Hugo and others have celebrated in heroics.

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brilliancy of his uniform, and, directing his sharpshooters to make a general dash upon the square before them, he rode at full gallop upon the General and took him prisoner. The squares of the Guard, continuing their retreat, made their way unbroken to La Belle Alliance, entering the Charleroi road there before the general tide of pursuit had reached that point; and Halkett, still pursuing, and by this time well in advance both of Adam and of Vivian, became so involved among the broken yet numerous and still resisting bodies of French troops that the squares he had followed across the field at last slipped beyond his reach.²⁵⁰ Halkett

²⁵⁰ The stories of what Cambronne said and did, and what befell his remnant of the Guard on this occasion, are given by the chroniclers of the two nations in forms wholly irreconcilable. His countrymen thrust upon him honour which he disclaimed, and the English, by way of compensation, loaded him with a kind of detraction equally uncalled for. Their sentiment, indeed, seems to have been predetermined: as long before as February 26th, Sir Neil Campbell had written from Leghorn to Lord Castlereagh, prophesying that Napoleon would shortly leave Elba and "take with him Gen. Drouot and those of his Guards upon whom he can most depend," and among them "Gen. Cambronne (a desperate uneducated ruffian, who was a drummer with him in Egypt)." Having this last phrase in mind perhaps, and with the same kind of feeling which led Thiers to picture a drummer of the Old Guard pursuing the Prussian soldiers with his drumsticks (see pages 337, 338), a writer in the *Quarterly Review* garnishes the story about Wellington's dinner after

the battle with this incident:—"When the Duke had returned to eat the dinner which his confiding cook had prepared for him, the first person he saw in the room was the illustrious Cambronne (the reputed author of the phrase, '*La Garde meurt, et ne se rend pas*'). This good fellow had very quietly surrendered himself to a drummer, and had the modesty to think that he might invite himself to the Conqueror's table. The Duke, however, declined that honour (with others not less courteously suggested) on the plea of not knowing how far it might be agreeable to his Sovereign's ally, the King of France." This blackguard story is evidently a fabrication of later days, for Scott, who perpetuated in *Paul's Letters* all the amusing Waterloo gossip of the time, says only this:—"Gen. Cambronne was also said to have fallen after refusing quarter and announcing to the British, by whom it was offered, 'The Imperial Guard can die, but never surrender.' The speech and the devotion of the General received honourable mention in the Minutes

and his Hanoverians had thus got so far before the general Allied advance that they were not reached by

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of the Chamber of Representatives. But the passage was ordered to be erased next day, it being discovered that Gen. Cambronne was a prisoner in Lord Wellington's camp." The fact appears to be, as to the saying, that "it was invented by a celebrated inventor of *bonmots*, Rougemont, and appeared in the *Indépendant* two days after the battle"—that is, while Cambronne was still supposed to be among the dead, who could tell no tales. When he reappeared, however, and for the remainder of his days, he used to repel the imputation; and, according to a foot-note in *The Table Talk and Opinions of Napoleon I.*—a work compiled by an English lady, and the authority for charging the saying to Rougemont—"Cambronne, when pressed by a lady to repeat the words he really did use, replied, 'Ma foi, Madame, je ne sais pas au juste ce que j'ai dit à l'officier anglais qui me criait de me rendre; mais ce qui est certain est qu'il comprenait le Français, et qu'il m'a répondu, *Mange !*'" On the other hand, Cambronne is declared to have affirmed that he was at the time so stunned by a sabre-cut in the head as to be incapable of saying anything whatever. The grandiose tribute to the Guard, however, had been coined and had received the imprimatur of Napoleon himself; and, failing Cambronne, its admirers were driven to find another hero into whose mouth to put it—this safe course being taken by Thiers. Others—notably Victor Hugo—boldly vary the phrase used and attribute that to Cam-

bronne; and yet others, taking the altered phrase, select another speaker. Of these is De Lesclure, who says in his *Napoléon et sa Famille*: "Napoleon does not appear to have known, in its last details and in its supreme agony, this justly popular and legendary resistance—this last sigh, contained in a last oath purified by blood and fire, in presence of which even the English themselves, trampling under foot their habitual prudery, took off their hats. Cambronne, modest, like true courage, disowned the word subsequently attributed to Col. Michel, and which, seeing the moment at which it was spoken, was sublime as a line of Corneille." =The story of the Guard's last struggle, as embodied in the Napoleonic legend, is thus rendered by Thiers:—"The *débris* of the battalions of the Guard were driven pell-mell into the valley, where they still fought without yielding. Now were heard those words that shall live for ages, and which some attribute to Gen. Cambronne and others to Col. Michel—"The Guard dies, but yields not!" Cambronne fell almost mortally wounded, and remained lying on the ground, for he would not allow his men to leave their ranks to bear him away. The 2d battalion of the 3d grenadiers, reduced from 500 to 300 men, remained in the valley with their comrades lying lifeless beneath their feet and hundreds of slaughtered horsemen dead before them, but they still continue the combat and refuse to surrender. Closing their ranks as they are thinned, they await a last attack,

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Wellington's orders that all his troops should stay their march at Rossome; and they kept moving on with the

and now, assailed on four sides at once, they discharge a fearful volley that brings down hundreds of cavalry. The enemy, exasperated, brought up their artillery, and discharged volley after volley in rapid succession on the four angles of the square. The angles of this living citadel were beaten down; the square extended its lines in order to occupy more space and protect the wounded who had taken refuge in the centre. These brave men stood another charge firmly, bringing down the enemy in their turn. Too few now remained to form a square: they took advantage of a short respite to form into a triangle turned toward the enemy, so that in retrograding they could save those who had taken refuge behind their bayonets. They are again attacked. 'We will not yield,' cried those valiant men, now reduced to 150. Then, discharging their muskets for the last time, they all rushed on the cavalry that were pressing them so fiercely, and with their bayonets killed both men and horses until they sank in this last sublime outburst of heroism. Admirable devotedness, unsurpassed in the records of history!" = Victor Hugo devotes to the alleged holocaust an entire chapter, which he entitles *The Last Square*:—"A few squares of the Guard, standing motionless in the swash of the rout, like rocks in running water, held out till night. They awaited the double shadow of night and death, and let them surround them. Each regiment, isolated from the others, and no longer connected with the army, which was broken on all sides, died

where it stood. In order to perform this last exploit, they had taken up a position, some on the heights of Rossome, others on the plain of Mont St. Jean. The gloomy squares, deserted, conquered and terrible, struggled formidably with death, for Ulm, Wagram, Jena, and Friedland were dying in it. When twilight set in at nine in the evening, one square still remained at the foot of the plateau of Mont St. Jean. In this mournful valley, at the foot of the slope scaled by the cuirassiers, now inundated by the English masses, beneath the converging fire of the hostile and victorious artillery, under a fearful hailstorm of projectiles, this square still resisted. It was commanded by an obscure officer of the name of Cambronne. At each volley the square diminished, but continued to reply to the canister with musketry fire, and each moment contracted its four walls. Fugitives in the distance, stopping at moments to draw breath, listened in the darkness to this gloomy diminishing thunder. —When this legion had become only a handful, when their colours were but a rag, when their ammunition was exhausted and muskets were clubbed, and when the pile of corpses was greater than the living group, the victors felt a species of sacred awe, and the English artillery ceased firing. It was a sort of respite; these combatants had around them an army of spectres, outlines of mounted men, the black profile of guns, and the white sky visible through the wheels; the colossal death's head which heroes ever glimpse in the smoke of a battle, advanced and

Prussians until, late at night, finding no British troops about them, they stopped until morning near Genappe.

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looked at them. They could hear in the twilight gloom that the guns were being loaded; the lighted matches, resembling the eyes of a tiger in the night, formed a circle round their heads. The linstocks of the English batteries approach the guns, and at this moment an English general, Colville according to some, Maitland according to others, holding the supreme moment suspended over the heads of these men, shouted to them, 'Brave Frenchmen, surrender!'—Cambronne answered: ['****!']—Out of respect to the French reader, the finest word, perhaps, that a Frenchman ever uttered cannot be repeated to him. We are thus forbidden to record a sublimity in history.—At our own risk and peril, we break this prohibition.—Among these giants, then, there was one Titan—Cambronne.—To speak that word, and then to die—what could be more grand! for it is virtually dying, thus to choose death; and it is not this man's fault if, in spite of the grapeshot fired at him, he survived.—The man who gained the battle of Waterloo is not Napoleon put to rout; it is not Wellington giving way at 4 o'clock—desperate at 5; nor Blücher, who did not fight; the man who gained the battle of Waterloo is Cambronne.—To fulminate such a word at the lightning which kills you, is to conquer.—To make this response a fatal catastrophe—to speak thus to destiny—to give this base to the future lion—to fling this reply at the rain of the night, at the treacherous wall of Hougomont, at the sunken road of Ohain, at the delay of Grouchy, at the

arrival of Blücher—to be ironical in the sepulchre—to manage so as to remain erect after one shall have fallen—to drown in two syllables the European coalition—to offer to kings these privities already known to the Cæsars—to make the last of words the first, by associating it with the glory of France—to wind up Waterloo insolently with a Shrove-Tuesday—to complete Leonidas by Rabelais—to sum up this victory in one supreme word, impossible to pronounce—to lose the field, and to keep history; after this carnage to have the laughter for one's own—is immense.—It is an insult to the thunderbolt that attains the grandeur of Æschylus.—The word of Cambronne has the effect of a fracture. It is the bursting of a heart by disdain; it is the excess of agony exploding. Who conquered? Wellington? No. Without Blücher he had been lost. Blücher? No. If Wellington had not commenced, Blücher could not have finished. This Cambronne—this passer of the last hour—this unknown soldier—this infinitesimal of war—feels that there is a lie in a catastrophe doubly bitter; and at the moment when he is bursting with rage at it, they offer him that mockery—life! How shall he contain himself? There they are—all the kings of Europe—the successful generals, the thundering Jupiters; they have a hundred thousand victorious soldiers, and behind the hundred thousand a million; their canons, with matches lighted, are open-mouthed; they have under their heels the Imperial Guard and the Grand Army; they have just

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Simultaneously with the two advances against the French centre by Adam's brigade and Halkett's batta-

crushed Napoleon, and only Cambronne remains; there is only this earth-worm left to protest. He will protest. Then he seeks a word as one seeks a sword. He foams at the mouth, and that foam is the word. Before that prodigious and mediocre victory, before that victory without victors, this desperate man draws himself up; he endures its enormity, but he asserts its nothingness; and he does more than spit upon it; and overwhelmed by numbers, by strength and by material force, he finds in his soul an expression—[* * * *]. We repeat it, to say that, to do that, to find that, is to be the conqueror.—The spirit of great days entered into this unknown man at that fatal moment. Cambronne finds the word of Waterloo, as Rouget de l'Isle finds the *Marseillaise*—by a flash of inspiration. An effluence from the divine afflatus detaches itself and passes through these men, and they start up: and the one sings the supreme song, and the other utters the terrible cry. That word of Titanic scorn, Cambronne hurls not only at Europe in the name of the Empire—that would be little—he hurls it at the past in the name of the Revolution. We hear it; and we recognise in Cambronne the old soul of the giants. It seems as if it were Danton speaking, or Kleber roaring.—On hearing this insulting word, the English voice replied, 'Fire!' The batteries belched forth flame, the hill trembled; but from all these bronze throats issued a last and fearful eruption of canister; a vast smoke, whitened by the rising moon, rolled along the valley, and when it disap-

peared there was nothing left. This formidable remnant was annihilated, the Guard was dead. The four walls of the living redoubt were levelled with the ground; here and there a dying convulsion could be seen. And it was thus that the French legions, greater than the Roman legions, expired at Mont St. Jean on the rain- and blood-soaked ground, at the spot which Joseph, who carries the Nivelles mail-bags, now passes at four o'clock every morning, whistling and gaily flogging his horse." = Cambronne's well-established disclaimer of anything exceptionally heroic about his surrender accords with the description given by Siborne, who describes Halkett as galloping upon the French general, and continues:—"When he had come up with him and was about to cut him down, the latter called out that he would surrender. Cambronne, for he it was, then preceded Halkett as he returned to the Hanoverian battalion; but he had not gone many paces before Halkett's horse was wounded and fell to the ground. In a few seconds, however, Halkett succeeded in getting him on his legs again, when he found that his prisoner was escaping in the direction of the French column: he instantly overtook him, seized him by the aiguillette, brought him to the battalion, and gave him in charge to a sergeant of the Osnabrückers, who was to deliver him to the Duke." = Scott, after mentioning in his *Life of Napoleon* the stories of which Thiers' and Victor Hugo's amplifications have been quoted, goes on:—"And one edition of the story adds that

lion, Vivian, on their right, in a third direction, was continuing his attacks upon the two squares of the Old Guard and their supporting cavalry and artillery near La Belle Alliance. After his first charge with the 10th hussars had dispersed the French cavalry on the (French) left of the squares, he lost no time in bringing up the 18th regiment to attack those on their right—chiefly cuirassiers with artillery before the right-hand square. As the 18th, in perfect formation, were advancing impetuously to the charge, a French battery attempted to cross their front at a gallop, from left to right of the hussars—the artillery being probably in quest of a position from which they could enfilade the advancing Allied infantry in the valley; but the hussars were too quick for them; they cut down the artillerymen and drivers, and secured the guns. In another moment they fell upon the advanced line of the cuirassiers, who scattered before their onset; and then, bringing forward the left shoulder, they charged the cavalry beside the square and the guns. These stood their ground, and the hussars dashed in among them and engaged in a sharp hand-to-hand fight; but the French were soon forced to give way, cavalry and artillerymen; and the entire mass, British and French, rolled confusedly away, still struggling, toward La Belle Alliance and the road to Charleroi behind it. The two squares of the Guard now stood denuded of supports, and Vivian started to bring up against them the 1st

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thereupon the battalions made a half-wheel inwards, and discharged their muskets into each others' bosoms, to save themselves from dying at the hands of the English. . . . The military conduct of the French Guard," Scott comments, "is better eulogised by the undisputed truth, that they fought to extremity with the most

unyielding constancy, than by imputing to them an act of regimental suicide upon the lost field of battle. Every attribute of brave men they have a first right to claim. . . . Whether the words were used by Cambronne or no, the Guard well deserved to have them inscribed on their monument."

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hussars of the King's German Legion, which still remained in reserve; but on his way he came upon Major Howard with that portion of the 10th hussars, less in number than a squadron, which had been held back from riding into the valley behind Hougomont after the success of the first charge. These were suffering from the fire of the left square of the grenadiers, and Vivian resolved to attack it, small as Howard's force was, since he saw rapidly approaching on his left a red infantry regiment which, he took for granted, would attack the face and angle of the square nearest to it while Howard attacked another angle. But the red troops were Halkett's battalion, too intent upon their immediate enemy to be diverted to another; and it thus resulted that the hussars, led by both Vivian and Howard, engaged a force greatly too strong for them. They charged home to the bayonets of the Guard, who stood their ground, and a desperate struggle took place, in which many fell on both sides—among them three of the English lieutenants, besides Howard, who was shot through the mouth and lay senseless on the ground, when one of the Guard, leaving the ranks, beat him upon the head with the butt-end of his musket.²⁵¹ The

²⁵¹ Howard's death was celebrated by Byron in several stanzas of *Childe Harold*, beginning thus:—

“—— One I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd
The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,
They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young, gallant Howard!”

Southey also devotes a stanza to his memory:—

“Here, from the heaps who strew'd the fatal plain,
Was Howard's corpse by faithful hands convey'd,
And, not to be confounded with the slain,
Here, in a grave apart with reverence laid,

hussars had not strength to break a square of such veterans as they had here encountered ; but they were

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Till hence his honour'd relics o'er the seas
Were borne to England, there to rest in peace."

A poem known probably to few outside of the readers of Siborne's book—which includes it as an appendix—was written "By an Officer of the 10th Hussars, who was present," Colonel—in 1815, Captain—T. W.

Taylor. His description has a definiteness as to the events and a fidelity to historical truth unusual in poems of its class, and it gives an excellent picture of the part taken in the battle of Waterloo by Vivian's brigade:—

"THE DEATH OF HOWARD.

"Back rolls the tide of war; its reflux wave
E'en Ney arrests not, 'Bravest of the Brave.'
For ever turn'd, in wild confusion throng
Horse, cannon, infantry, the slope along;
And while with parting glare the sun illumines
Helm, cuirass, sabre, lances, pennons, plumes,
Such splendid pageantry of glorious war
Alone must swell the soul; but higher far
The feelings rose, to see the pride of France
Thus routed, mingled, while our bands advance,
Each serried column form'd in order due,
Each eye elate this glorious end to view.
Hark! on the right exulting shouts arise,
And the huzza of Britons rends the skies;
From the left flank, in column, winding far,
Speeds with a whirlwind's force the swift hussar;
Tho' to their thund'ring hoofs the plain resounds,
Still cautious discipline their ardour bounds.
Who, with a hero's port and lofty form,
With waving sabre onward guides the storm,
While through the tangled corn and yielding clay
His spurs incessant urge his panting grey?
'Tis Vivian, pride of old Cornubia's hills,
His veins th' untainted blood of Britons fills.

"Him followed close a Manners, glorious name;
In him a Granby's soul aspires to fame,
Or such as erst, when Rodney gain'd the day,
Ebb'd from his kinsman's wound with life away.
'Front form the line!' cries Vivian; still its course
The head maintain'd, the rear with headlong force
Speeds at the word, till troops to troops combine,
And each firm squadron forms the serried line.
Now to their head as eager Uxbridge rush'd,
Fate check'd his wish to lead, as sudden gush'd

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infuriated by the fall of their officers and pressed on into the ranks, parrying the bayonet-thrusts and slash-

A purple torrent from his ebbing wound,
And from his charger hurl'd, he press'd the ground ;
No groan he utter'd, breath'd no fainting sigh,
But on our squadrons bent his anxious eye.
Th' heroic eye spoke firm contempt of pain,
But disappointment not to lead again.
Then pierc'd the fatal ball young Gunning's heart ;
Headlong he fell, nor felt one instant's smart :
Calm, pale as marble forms on tombs, he lay
As days had sped since pass'd his soul away :
His charger onward on the squadron's flank
To battle rush'd, and kept its master's rank.

“ Vain ! [tho' still worthy of their former fame,
And from a gen'rous foe respect to claim,]
Vain the attempt ! Some gallant bands appear
Arrang'd to check the fierce hussars' career,
Awhile protection for their rear to form
And shield it from the desolating storm.
The helm'd dragoon upon our right bears down,
Couched are the lances of a band that crown
The hill's low brow, and down at speed they burst,
Sabre meets lance, and blow encounters thrust.
They turn, they fly. Vain hope to rally ! Vain !
To stem our onward course ; o'er all the plain
Amid their bands confusion reigns supreme,
While o'er their heads our threat'ning sabres gleam.
At length a pause : a band of vet'rans true,
Whom no dire terrors of pursuit subdue,
Form the close square, and on a swelling brow
Unmov'd they stand, undaunted ; onward flow
The streaming fugitives, yet still they stand,
Resolv'd to perish for their *beauteous land* ;
Resolv'd, indignant, ere the field they leave,
The stains on Gallic honour to retrieve.
Here, should they rest, by their example warn'd,
Others may join, and conflict fierce be form'd.
Charge, Howard ! charge ! and sweep them from the field :
To British swords their bayonets must yield—
To high emprise upon the battle's plain
When was the name of Howard call'd in vain ?
Worthy his great progenitors, he heard
The call, exulting, and with ready word,
' Charge, brave hussars ! ' he cried, and wav'd on high
His gleaming sword. Forward at once they fly—

ing at the grenadiers, fighting with such fury and desperation that the square—which was now isolated from other French troops—yielded gradually to the pressure and slowly fell back until it came to the nearest of those “hollow-ways” entering the Charleroi road from the west.²⁵² Into this it descended precipitately, and joined the broken mass of the French army behind La Belle Alliance.=During this last attack Vandeleur’s brigade—which was led by Col. Sleigh, of the 11th light dragoons, after Vandeleur took general command of the cavalry upon the fall of Uxbridge—had come up on Vivian’s right. It had moved when the Allied line made its general advance, and, proceeding

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No tighten’d rein, no high curvetting airs
 (As their cuirassiers hover’d round our squares,
 In hopes, perchance, some trembling files to spy,
 Vain hopes, in hands where all were prompt to die),
 Now to each panting steed the spurs were press’d,
 His mane wav’d o’er the rider’s forward breast—
 Thus rush’d the gallant squadron on the foe,
 Yet firm they stood, their arms in levell’d row
 Their volleying thunders pour’d our ranks among,
 Where foremost blade on foremost musket rung.
 Three gallant youths the van exulting led,
 Three by the deadly volley instant bled—
 Arnold and Bacon fall, again to rise ;
 From three fell wounds brave Howard’s spirit flies :
 Full many a warrior on that dreadful day,
 Brave, generous, gentle, breath’d his soul away,
 But one, more gentle, generous, or brave,
 Never in battle found a soldier’s grave.
 Alas ! what tears shall dim the lovely eyes
 Of her who now for absence only sighs—
 Her, whom to leave gives death its keenest smart,
 Its deepest anguish to his bursting heart.

“Short were your pangs, but ere the spirit fled,
 Heaven grant you saw that not in vain you bled ;
 That your brave followers on the broken foe,
 With vengeance wing’d, dealt many a deadly blow,
 Till mercy check’d each hand, and bade them spare
 The suppliant remnants of the vanquished square.”

²⁵² See diagram, page 371.

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at a trot along the eastern edge of Hougomont, had driven before it many fugitives of every description of force until, on the southern side of the valley and beyond where Vivian was engaged, it confronted a large column of French infantry in the act of forming square to check its progress; but the dragoons, receiving the fire of the French, charged and either took or destroyed the entire body, while the 11th light dragoons, at the right of the brigade, took a battery near the south-eastern angle of Hougomont—the last French guns in position. The brigade was now not far from the range of heights which close in the valley on its southern side, and upon these were seen moving in good order an entire French cavalry brigade—that of Piré, which was marching from its former station on the extreme French left to a point on the Charleroi road in rear of the army, to cover its retreat; and the dragoons were thus compelled to be circumspect in their further operations. By this time Vandeleur's brigade and Vivian's 1st hussars of the German Legion, which was yet in reserve, had come to be the only Allied cavalry retaining anything like a semblance of formation. The other regiments, after their original charges, had plunged into the southern valley in pursuit, and had there become broken into greater or smaller parties, which followed up their success as chance led them. But there had been a general tendency among the fugitives to seek the Charleroi road, and there—especially about the place where the sunken crossroads intersect the highroad and form trenches that stopped the advance of horsemen from the plain—most of the scattered bands were getting together at the time Vandeleur's brigade reached the front; and its presence, together with the coming up of the 1st hussars of the German Legion, made it pos-

sible to a certain extent to assemble and re-form the victorious troopers.

The whole district around the Charleroi road back of La Belle Alliance now presented an indescribable scene of turmoil and confusion. Into it, as into a funnel, were pouring from every direction the streams of fugitives and pursuers which were rapidly emptying the recent battlefield of all its combatants, and were here mingled in a tumultuous rabble, where victor and vanquished were equally powerless to order their movements. "The cavalry thus situated in the van of the Duke's victorious army had now become almost helpless: it seemed as if carried aloft on the billows of the agitated sea, yielding rather to its impulses than controlling the angry element. As might have been expected, there were innumerable instances in which the rage and disappointment of the conquered foe gave rise to covert assaults, which, however, were speedily repressed, more especially by the Prussians, against whom a word or look sufficed to draw down their vengeance upon an enemy whom they held in detestation. The 10th and 18th hussars of Vivian's brigade, whilst endeavouring to re-form between La Belle Alliance and Rossome, found themselves in the midst of an immense crowd, composed partly of defeated soldiers of the Imperial Guard, who could but ill conceal their mortification, and who seized every opportunity that offered to gratify their hatred and revenge. Lt.-Col. the Hon. Henry Murray, commanding the 18th, was very nearly bayoneted by one of them; and his orderly was compelled, for the security of his master, to cut down five or six in rapid succession."²⁵³ To intensify

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²⁵³ The quotation is from Siborne, and shows the state of things at the rear of the flying French army: how

it fared at the front is told by the Erckmann - Chatrian conscript:—"The English pushed us into the

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this turbulence, the light, which had long been failing, was fast giving place to darkness when Bülow's and Pirch's Prussians bore down the resistance against

valley, and it was through this valley that Blücher was coming. The generals and officers and even the Emperor himself were compelled to take refuge in a square. . . . The square of the Guard began to retreat, firing from all sides in order to keep off the wretches who sought safety within it. Only the officers and generals might save themselves. . . . In the distance the *grenadière* was sounding like an alarm bell in the midst of a conflagration. But this was much more terrible: it was the last appeal of France, of a proud and courageous nation; it was the voice of the country saying, 'Help, my children! I perish!' This rolling of the drums of the Old Guard in the midst of disaster had in it something touching and horrible. . . . The uproar could be heard for at least two leagues; cavalry, infantry, artillery, ambulances, and baggage-wagons were creeping along the road pell-mell, howling, beating, neighing, and weeping. . . . The moon rose above the wood behind Planchenoit, and lighted up this crowd of shapskas, bear-skin caps, helmets, sabres, bayonets, broken caissons, and abandoned cannon: the crowd and confusion increased every moment: plaintive howls were heard from one end of the line to the other, rolling up and down the hillside and dying away in the distance like a sigh. . . . 'Every one for himself!—I shall crush you, —so much the worse for you,—I am the stronger,—you scream, but it is all the same to me,—take care, take care,—I am on horseback,—I shall

hit you! room—let me get away—the others do just the same—room for the Emperor! room for the Marshal!' The strong crush the weak—the only thing in the world is strength! On! on! Let the cannons crush everything, if we can only save them!'"=To this frightful disorganization there were exceptions. "Two flags had been lost upon the field of battle, at the commencement of the action," says Charras, contradicting Thiers' reckless misrepresentation (note 170, page 261). "There was none other lost. In the crowd of these disbanded horsemen and foot soldiers, marching and running pell-mell, some still armed, the others having thrown away or broken their sabres and guns, under the impulse of rage, of despair, of terror, there were seen, here and there, by the pale light of the sky, little groups of officers of every grade and of soldiers spontaneously arrayed about the standard of each regiment, and advancing, sabre in hand, bayonet on the gun, resolute, imperturbable, in the midst of the general disorder. '*Place au drapeau!*' cried they when the rout arrested their march; and nearly always this cry sufficed to cause the very men who had become deaf to every word of command and to all discipline to stand aside before them, opening them a passage. Glorious representatives of military honour, they often had to endure, they always repulsed, the enemy's attack, and thus saved their conquered flags from the attempts of the conqueror."

which they had been struggling furiously at Planche-noit. They now came rushing through the village and along its either flank, streaming across the flow of the general current that rolled down the Charleroi road. In the gloom, the British and the Prussian horsemen—riding in toward the road from the opposite wings, each intent upon destroying as many as possible of the enemies before him, and neither looking for friends in that direction—encountered one another with sabrecuts, and several such encounters gained headway before the mistake was discovered. This new attack in flank added, if possible, to the dismay and confusion of the flying French. Among these there now remained but a single regiment of cavalry which preserved its formation amid the universal rout, and in spite of the efforts of Vandeleur's dragoons—the foremost troops in the pursuit—to disorder it. These retiring horsemen were the *grenadiers à cheval* of the Guard, and sheltered the infantry square of the Guard in which Napoleon and his staff were retiring from the field. “The 12th British light dragoons,” says Siborne, “were the nearest to it, having got in advance of the rest of the brigade, and were opposite the right flank of the column, whence a few pistol or carbine shots were fired at them. The 12th made a partial attack, but they were so much inferior in numbers (being very weak at this period) and were so greatly obstructed in their movements by the crowd, that they were unable to produce any impression upon so compact and steady a body of cavalry, which literally walked from the field in the most orderly manner, moving majestically along the stream the surface of which was covered with the innumerable wrecks into which the rest of the French army had been scattered.” In this manner the intermingled troops rolled as far as Rossome, where the

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advance of the foremost British brigades was stayed, and they bivouacked for the night, leaving the further pursuit to the Prussians.

Wellington had previously arranged with Blücher that the Prussian army, being comparatively fresh, should take up the pursuit so soon as the rout of the French was thoroughly completed ; and he had ordered his general line to halt upon the morning's position of the French at La Belle Alliance. He rode on himself until satisfied how completely the enemy had been destroyed, and then turned back to his headquarters at the village of Waterloo.²⁵⁴ As the two leaders had

²⁵⁴ The standard story of Waterloo represents that Wellington advanced only to Rossome, and on his way back met Blücher at La Belle Alliance—which is noted as a felicitous circumstance—and there concocted with the Prussian Field-Marshal the details of the pursuit. Such is Siborne's story, also that of Scott, Lockhart, Hazlitt, Alison, Gleig, and the generality of guide-books and encyclopædias. Thiers tells how the two embraced. The Rev. Mr. Abbott evades specific geography, but says: "Blücher and Wellington, with their dripping swords, met with congratulations in the midst of the bloody arena. Each claimed the honour of the victory." In Wellington's *Supplementary Despatches*, however, is published a letter from the Duke to W. Mudford, Esq., dated Paris, 8th June, 1816, which, speaking of the inaccuracies in accounts of the battle, says: "Of these a remarkable instance is to be found in the report of a meeting between Marshal Blücher and me at La Belle Alliance, and some have gone so far as to have seen the chair on which

I sat in that farm-house. It happened that the meeting took place after 10 at night at the village of Genappe, and anybody who attempts to describe with truth the operations of the different armies will see that it could not be otherwise. . . . But in truth I was not off my horse till I returned to Waterloo between 11 and 12 at night." The historians, therefore, are unanimously in error about the Belle Alliance episode, and their consequent deduction that it was on account of it that Blücher gave that name to the battle."=Of the Duke's return to Waterloo there is a story that he narrowly escaped being kicked to death by "Copenhagen" as he alighted at his headquarters. According to Gleig, "The gallant animal which had carried his master safely through the fatigues and dangers of the day, as if proud of the part which he had played in the great game, threw up his heels just as the Duke turned from him, and it was by a mere hairbreadth that the life was preserved which, in a battle of ten hours' duration, had been left unscathed."

agreed, the French were allowed no time for rest or opportunity to rally on the northern side of their own frontier. Bülow's corps was to follow them without a pause along the Charleroi road ; Zieten was to support Bülow ; and Pirch, turning back, was to march by way of Aywiers across the Dyle, to intercept the retreat which it was inferred Grouchy would attempt in the direction of the Sambre. Gneisenau led the pursuit, putting himself at the head of three squadrons of lancers, and pushing on with such energy as to occupy Gosselies before morning. "The *débris* of Napoleon's army," says Jomini, in the *Summary of the Campaign*, "regained Genappe in horrible disorder. In vain did the staff strive to form it into corps : everything was pell-mell. It would be unjust to reproach the troops for this : never had they fought with more valour, and the cavalry especially had surpassed itself ; but, little accustomed to seeing themselves thus turned and well nigh enveloped, having exhausted all their munitions, they thought it their duty to seek safety in the most precipitate retreat. Each one wishing to retake the road he had previously followed, they crossed each other in different directions, some to reach the road to Charleroi, others to secure that leading to Nivelles and escape from the enemy that already appeared on the former : the confusion was complete. The chief of Blücher's staff, a man of head and heart, was, notwithstanding the night, ordered in pursuit of this tumultuous crowd with the Prussian cavalry that had been least engaged. He appeared unexpectedly before Genappe, into which he threw a few shot and shell, and this gave the finishing stroke to the rout. The disorder was so much the greater, as the avenues of this defile had been barricaded to cover the parks that remained there ; and this precaution, so often neglected by the

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French, turned, under these circumstances, against them, by encumbering the only remaining passage-way. This augmented the confusion and doubled the loss of material." The task of the pursuers, in Thiers' words, "was well suited to the rage the Prussians felt against us. On this night they committed outrages disgraceful to their nation, and, if local traditions may be believed, they assassinated Gen. Duhesme, who fell wounded into their hands."²⁵⁵ The disorganization of the French was

²⁵⁵ Siborne says nothing of the killing of Duhesme, merely including him, with Lobau, Cambronne, and others, among the list of those taken prisoners. Scott, however, in *Paul's Letters*, narrates it circumstantially and as an act of Homeric retribution:—"He was overtaken in the village of Genappe by one of the Duke of Brunswick's black hussars, of whom he begged quarter. The soldier regarded him sternly with his sabre uplifted, and then briefly saying, 'The Duke of Brunswick died yesterday,' bestowed on him his death-wound.

Κάτθανε καὶ Πάτροκλος, ὅπερ σέο
πολλὸν ἀμείνων."

In reference to this story, see note 77, page 136, *ad finem*. = Victor Hugo relates Duhesme's assassination substantially as Scott had done, and adds with a certain candour, "Blücher commanded extermination. Rognet had given the mournful example of threatening with death any French grenadier who brought in a Prussian prisoner, and Blücher surpassed Rognet. . . . The victory was completed by the assassination of the vanquished. Let us punish as we are writing history—old Blücher dishonoured himself. This

ferocity set the seal on the disaster; the desperate rout passed through Genappe, passed through Quatre Bras, passed through Sambref, passed through Frasnes, passed through Thuin, passed through Charleroi, and only stopped at the frontier. Alas! and who was it flying in this way? The Grand Army." Charras says more emphatically than Victor Hugo: "The Prussians, raging, massacred wholesale, pitilessly. Duhesme was one of their noblest victims. 'This crime has remained unpunished!' exclaims Napoleon in his *Mémoires*. This is only too true. But had he the right to rebuke this atrocity—he who had not even reproved General Rognet, who threatened, on the day of Ligny, to shoot the first grenadier of the Guard who should bring him a Prussian prisoner?" (See note 58, page 108). = Scott had already suggested the palliation of the Prussian barbarities which Hugo and Charras admit. "The night," he says, "was illuminated by a bright moon, so that the flyers found no refuge and experienced as little mercy. To the last, indeed, the French had forfeited all claims, for their cruelty towards the Prussians taken on the 16th and towards the British wounded and

so complete that there was no one to create even a rearguard, which might easily have held the defile at Genappe long enough to obtain some respite for the mass of the fugitives, or even to enable them to re-form at some point in the rear. But no successful attempt

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prisoners made during the battle of the 18th was such as to exclude them from the benefit of the ordinary rules of war. . . . This unnatural hatred, rashly announced and cruelly acted upon, was as fearfully avenged. The Prussians listened not, and they had no reason to listen, to cries for mercy from those who had thus abused their momentary advantages over themselves and their allies; and their light horse, always formidable on such occasions, made a fearful and indiscriminate slaughter, scarce interrupted even by the temptation of plundering the baggage with which the roads were choked, and unchecked by an attempt at resistance. Those soldiers who had begun the morning with such hopes, and whose conduct during the battle had vindicated their having done so, were now so broken in heart and spirits that scores of them fled at sight of a single Prussian hussar."=Blücher's account of his triumph is given in the following letter to his family, announcing the fulfilment of the intentions he had expressed when writing from Wavre on the 17th (see note 67, page 120):—

"Battlefield, La Belle Alliance
[no date].

"What I promised I have performed. On the 16th I was forced to give way to force. On the 18th, in concert with my friend Wellington, I have given Napoleon the finishing stroke. What has become of him no-

body knows. His army is completely *en de Routt* [*sic*]. His artillery is in our hands. His orders, which he himself wore, have just been brought to me. They were taken in one of his carriages."

"Gosselles [*sic*], June 20, 1815.

"I have pretty well got over my fall, but have again had one of my horses wounded. I do not expect now very soon, and perhaps not at all, to have any great battles. Napoleon escaped in the night without hat and sword. His hat and sword I send to-day to the King. His very rich state cloak and his carriage are in my hands. I also possess his spy-glass, which he was accustomed to use on battle-days. The carriage I will send you. The only pity is it is injured. His jewels and all his valuables have become the booty of our troops. Nothing remains to him of his equipage. Many a soldier has 5,000 to 6,000 thalers booty. He was in the carriage in order to retreat when he was surrounded by our troops. He sprang out and threw himself without a sword on a horse, in doing which his hat fell off, and probably, favoured by the night, he has escaped, but heaven knows whither. To-day I advance into France with the greater part of the army. The consequences of this victory are not to be calculated, and in my judgment Napoleon must fall altogether, and the French nation must despise him."

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suit.

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11 P.M.

at a stand was made. Lobau did indeed assemble some 200 or 300 men at Genappe and attempt to show a front against the pursuers; but he was abandoned by his followers and made prisoner. The rearmost of the French troops in the place betook themselves to renewed flight as soon as the Prussians were heard coming. The Grand Army was for ever dissolved.

Napoleon had passed from the battlefield in the square of the Old Guard. "He had lost all hope," says Thiers. "With sombre but calm countenance, he rode in the centre of the square, his far-seeing glance probing futurity, and seeing that more than a battle had been lost that day! He only interrupted these gloomy meditations to enquire for his lieutenants, some of whom were among the wounded near him. . . . The square, in whose centre Napoleon had sought refuge, was so stupefied that the men advanced almost without speaking. Napoleon, alone, sometimes addressed a few words to the Major-General, or to his brother Jerome, who was still beside him. Sometimes, when much annoyed by the Prussian squadrons, the square halted, and the side that was attacked fired; then the sad and silent march was resumed, disturbed occasionally by the torrent of fugitives that swept by, or by the cavalry of the enemy. They thus arrived at Genappe about 11 at night. The bridge of this little town was so encumbered by the wagons of the artillery that the passage was completely blocked. . . . At Genappe Napoleon left the square of the Guard where he had taken refuge. The other squares, being encumbered by wounded and fugitives, had been broken up. From the time of their arrival at Genappe, each sought his own safety as best he could." With an escort of some twenty horsemen, Napoleon continued on the southern road, detaching, as they passed through Quatre Bras, an officer charged

with informing Grouchy what had befallen at Waterloo, and ordering him to retire upon Namur. The fallen Emperor ²⁵⁶—not yet admitting to himself that political

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Napoleon's
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I A.M.

²⁵⁶ A still sadder account of Napoleon's retreat is given in the *Mémoires* of Ségur, who was informed by Monthyon that, "when the catastrophe was declared, he and the Grand Marshal Bertrand could only enable the Emperor to make good his retreat to Charleroi by holding him up between them on his horse, his body sunk (*affaissé*) and his head shaking, overcome by a feverish

drowsiness." = Some lines of Béranger's refer to Napoleon's propensity to drowsiness in his later years. Their reference, it is true, is to the campaign of France in the preceding year; but they show that the habit was among the popular traditions of the great warrior. The verses are from *Les Souvenirs du Peuple*, the translation being Father Prout's:—

"Mais quand la pauvre Champagne
Fut en proie aux étrangers,
Lui, bravant tous les dangers,
Semblait seul tenir la campagne.
Un soir, tout comme aujourd'hui,
J'entends frapper à la porte;
J'ouvre, bon Dieu! C'ÉTAIT LUI!
Suiwi d'une faible escorte.
Il s'asseyoit où me voilà,
S'écriant: 'Oh, quelle guerre!
Oh, quelle guerre!'

"But when all Europe's gathered
strength
Burst o'er the French frontier at
length,
'Twill scarcely be believed
What wonders, single-handed, he
achieved.
Such general ne'er lived!
One evening on my threshold stood
A guest—'Twas HE! Of warriors
few
He had a toil-worn retinue.
He flung himself into this chair of
wood,
Muttering, meantime, with fear-
ful air,
'Quelle guerre! oh, quelle guerre!'

"'J'ai faim,' dit-il; et bien vite
Je sers piquette et pain bis.
Puis il sèche ses habits;
Même à dormir le feu l'invite.
Au réveil, voyant mes pleurs,
Il me dit: 'Bonne espérance!
Je cours de tous ses malheurs
Sous Paris venger la France!'"

"He said, 'Give me some food,'—
Brown loaf I gave, and homely
wine,
And made the kindling fire-
blocks shine,
To dry his cloak with wet bedewed.
Soon by the bonny blaze he slept,
Then, waking, chid me (for I
wept);
'Courage!' he cried, 'I'll strike for
all
Under the sacred wall
Of France's noble capital!'"

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 Napoleon's
 flight.
 June 19.
 1 A.M.

and military power had gone from him—pressed on toward Paris, and before daybreak was at Charleroi, where, four days before, he had entered so splendidly upon this short-lived campaign. The fast-following Prussians allowed him but one hour's rest at this place—then he was compelled to begin his flight anew.

Over the archway of the gate through which Napoleon entered their town on June 15th and departed on June 19th the people of Charleroi have engraved the inscription—²⁵⁷

ABIIT . EXCESSIT . EVASIT . ERVPIT .

Charras says of the flight from Waterloo that the Imperial party "betook themselves across the fields, making a long detour to the west of the highroad, to avoid any re-encounter with the Prussian cavalry." Of the latter part of the flight he says, "Before sunrise Napoleon reached [Charleroi]. Fugitives, especially cavalry who still remained mounted, had preceded him. There was already disorder in the town. Napoleon traversed it without stopping, and made a short halt beyond the Sambre, in the plain of Marcinelle.

They found for him in Charleroi two wretched vehicles. He got into one with Bertrand, designated four or five of his officers to enter the other, and started for Philippeville, without a single horseman for escort."

²⁵⁷ The comparison of Napoleon with Catiline probably originated with Scott, who quoted as a note to his *Field of Waterloo* Sallust's account of the defeat and death in battle of the conspirator—an account somewhat suggestive of Waterloo,—and amplified it in this passage:—

What yet remains?—shall it be thine
 To head the relics of thy line
 In one dread effort more?—
 The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
 And thou canst tell what fortune proved
 That Chieftain who, of yore,
 Ambition's dizzy paths essay'd
 And with the gladiators' aid
 For empire enterprised—
 He stood the cast his rashness play'd
 Left not the victims he had made,
 Dug his red grave with his own blade,
 And on the field he lost was laid,
 Abhorr'd—but not despised.

This narrative ends with the battle of Waterloo ; but it may be not improper to add a reference to some of the events which were consequent upon it :—

Waterloo.
Napoleon's
flight.
The sequel.

June 21, 1815.	Napoleon reached Paris. Tumults in the Chamber of Representatives.
„ 22, „	Napoleon's second Abdication.
„ 25, „	Napoleon retired to Malmaison. His Farewell Address to the Army.
July 7, „	The Allies entered Paris.
„ 8, „	Louis XVIII. entered Paris. Second Restoration.
„ 15, „	Napoleon embarked on H.M.S. <i>Bellerophon</i> .
Aug. 7, „	Napoleon transferred to H.M.S. <i>Northumberland</i> .
Sep. 26, „	The Holy Alliance formed.
Oct. 16, „	Napoleon arrived at St. Helena.
Nov. 20, „	Second Peace of Paris.
Dec. 6, „	Ney condemned to death by the Chamber of Peers.

“ But if revolves thy fainter thought
 On safety,—howsoever bought,
 Then turn thy fearful rein and ride,
 Though twice ten thousand men have died
 On this eventful day,
 To gild the military fame
 Which thou, for life, in traffic tame
 Wilt barter thus away.
 Shall future ages tell this tale
 Of inconsistence faint and frail ?
 And art thou He of Lodi's bridge,
 Marengo's field, and Wagram's ridge !
 Or is thy soul like mountain-tide,
 That, swelled by winter storm and shower,
 Rolls down in turbulence of power,
 A torrent fierce and wide ;
 Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,
 Shrinking unnoticed, mean and poor,
 Whose channel shows display'd
 The wrecks of its impetuous course,
 But not one symptom of the force
 By which these wrecks were made ! ”

Waterloo.	Dec. 7, 1815.	Ney shot, at Paris.
The sequel.	May 5, 1821.	Napoleon died, at Longwood, St. Helena.
	Nov. 30, 1840.	Napoleon's body reached France.
	Dec. 15, „	Napoleon's body placed in the Hôtel des Invalides.

The losses. The losses in the three armies that fought at Waterloo were enormous, when considered in comparison with the total number of combatants. Those of the Allies, according to Siborne's official returns, were—

	Killed		Wounded		Missing		Total
	Officers	Under-officers and men	Officers	Under-officers and men	Officers	Under-officers and men	
ANGLO-ALLIED ARMY							
British	85	1,334	365	4,560	10	582	6,936
King's German Legion . .	27	335	77	932	1	217	1,589
Hanoverians	18	276	63	1,035	3	207	1,602
Brunswickers	7	147	26	420	—	50	660
Nassauers	5	249	19	370	—	—	643
Dutch-Belgians (estimate)	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,000
Total	142	2,341	550	7,327	14	1,056	15,430
PRUSSIAN ARMY							
	22	1,203	162	4,225	39	1,347	6,998
Total losses of the Allies	164	3,544	712	11,552	53	2,403	22,428

Hooper—the most recent writer on the subject who has gone carefully into the figures of the campaign since the scrutiny made by Charras—makes no material change in Siborne's figures; but Charras believes the Prussian return to be “a maximum.” These figures are exclusive of the 2,467 Prussians who fell at Wavre, and who of course ought to be included in the day's losses.=The losses in Napoleon's army have been conjecturally estimated all the way from 20,000 to 40,000. Hooper says, “What the losses of the French were is mere matter of estimate, but the total in killed, wounded, and prisoners cannot have been less than 30,000. They also lost the whole of their artillery, ammunition wagons,

baggage, and train. The Anglo-Allied army captured 122 guns, 267 ammunition wagons and 20 spare carriages, 2 eagles, and 5000 prisoners." Thiers says, "This fatal day cost us more than 20,000 men, counting the 5000 or 6000 wounded who fell into the hands of the English,"—but then Thiers, always untrustworthy as to numbers, states the Allied loss as "more than 30,000 men." Charras—repudiating Napoleon's estimate of 23,600, of whom 7,000 were prisoners, and making a calculation, "perhaps not exact," he says, from evidences found in the French War Office—believes the number of killed, wounded, and prisoners to have been between 31,000 and 32,000. The number of French who perished can never be more precisely known; but it may be generally stated that, as a military body, the Grand Army was annihilated. = The losses in the English army, in Sir Walter Scott's phrase, "threw half Britain into mourning. . . . It required all the glory and all the solid advantages of this immortal day to reconcile the mind to the high price at which it was purchased."

Waterloo.
The losses.

As the result of the final overthrow of Napoleon's power and the absolute elimination of himself from the world of action, Europe enjoyed the assurance of a general peace for the first time in almost a quarter of a century—since the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1793. But whether the nations of Europe gained more than a change of tyrants is far from clear; for the machinations of the Congress of Vienna, which Napoleon's sally from Elba had momentarily disconcerted, were promptly revived and consolidated into the iniquitous compact of the Holy Alliance, with as shameless disregard of political morality and the rights of nationalities as had ever been manifested by Napo-

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leon in his consuming ambition for universal empire.²⁵⁸ The first exercise by the Allied Powers of their regained ascendancy was to impose the Bourbons once more upon subjugated France, and to load her with ingeniously onerous conditions,—stripping her of the territory acquired under the Republic, the Consulate, and the Empire; placing foreign armies of occupation in her fortresses; exacting from her the payment of indemnities exceeding \$300,000,000; and compelling the restitution of those spoils of foreign capitals which

²⁵⁸ The Holy Alliance, by whomsoever devised, was originally brought forward by the Czar Alexander, and the rulers of Austria and Prussia became his accomplices in the crime, and coerced Europe, so far as they were able, into connivance. So strenuous, however, has been the execration awarded it by the common consent of mankind that even those who were most intimately involved in it have striven to repudiate it and shift its odium upon others. Thus Metternich, who is a synonym for Austria, and who professes to give the history of the Holy Alliance in his *Memoirs*, describes it as “nothing more than a philanthropic aspiration clothed in a religious garb,” and a “loud-sounding nothing;” says that the Emperor Francis of Austria, when informed of its purport, declared that it “does not please me at all,” and that the King of Prussia “agreed with the Emperor Francis, except that he hesitated to reject the views of the Russian monarch entirely;” declares that, fortified by these objections, he (Metternich) prevailed upon Alexander to allow the emasculation of his progeny; and

adds that the matter was of very little importance, because “never afterwards did it happen that the ‘Holy Alliance’ was made mention of between the cabinets.” The difference may be in part one of names, but it is very sure that the political code popularly stigmatized as the Holy Alliance was imposed by the three Eastern Allies upon unwilling Europe, with the exceptions only of Great Britain and the Holy See. Even England—though she made a merit of holding aloof—received much of the odium. Greville’s *Memoirs* (August 13, 1822), in speaking of Lord Castlereagh’s suicide and reviewing the part he had taken in the Congress of Vienna, says, “We have associated ourselves with the members of the Holy Alliance, and countenanced the acts of ambition and despotism in such a manner as to have drawn upon us the detestation of the nations of the Continent, and our conduct toward them at the close of the war has brought a stain upon our character for bad faith and desertion which no time will wipe away, and the recollections of which will never be effaced from their minds.”

adorned Paris as trophies of her military glory.²⁵⁹ The legacy of hatreds thus bequeathed was not forgotten when the audacious charlatanism of the Second Empire restored France—and to all appearance permanently—to her old position as the “Grand Nation,” so abhorred by Blücher. Napoleon III revived his uncle’s quarrel with Russia in the Crimean War. From Austria he wrested away her western provinces, to create again a Kingdom of Italy. Prussia would have been visited

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²⁵⁹ The terms of the second Treaty of Paris (November 20, 1815), as summarized by Alison, were as follows:—“The French frontier was restored to the state in which it stood in 1790, by which means the whole of the territory, far from inconsiderable, gained by the Treaty of 1814, was resumed by the Allies. In consequence of this France lost the fortresses of Landau, Sarre-Louis, Philippeville, and Marienburg, with the adjacent territory of each. Versoix, with a small district around it, was ceded to the canton of Geneva; the fortress of Huningen was to be demolished, but the little county of Venaissin, the first conquest of the Revolution, was ceded to France. Seven hundred millions of francs [\$140,000,000] was to be paid to the Allied Powers for the expenses of the war, in addition to which it was stipulated that an army of 150,000 men, composed of 30,000 from each of the great powers of England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, and the lesser powers of Germany, was to occupy, for a period of not less than three or more than five years, the whole frontier fortresses of France, from Cambray to Fort Louis, including Valenciennes and Quesnoit, Maubeuge and Landrecy;

and this large force was to be maintained entirely at the expense of the French Government. In addition to this the different powers obtained indemnities for the spoiliations inflicted on them by France during the Revolution, which amounted to the enormous sum of 735,000,000 francs more [\$147,000,000]. A hundred millions of francs were also provided to the smaller powers as an indemnity for the expenses of the war, so that the total sums which France had to pay, besides maintaining the army of occupation, was no less than 1,535,000,000 francs [\$307,000,000]. Truly, France now underwent the severe but just law of retaliation; she was made to feel what she had formerly inflicted on Germany, Italy, and Spain. Great Britain, in a worthy spirit, gave up the whole sum falling to her out of the indemnity for the war [amounting to nearly \$25,000,000] to the King of the Netherlands, to erect the famous barrier against France which Joseph II had so insantly demolished; and the Allied Powers unanimously gave the highest proof of their sense of Wellington being the first of European generals by conferring upon him the command of the army of occupation.”

with greater humiliation, had it been in the power of the French Emperor to inflict it; but Prussia—which had been goaded into the way toward greatness by the oppressions of Napoleon I—had become the greatest of military states when Napoleon III was forced into challenging her to renew the old quarrel; and her King—who had served under Blücher in 1815—triumphantly crossed the much-disputed Rhine once more in 1870, and had become the Emperor of Germany when for the second time the German army entered Paris over the ruins of a French Empire, and exacted from France another incredibly great ransom. England, alone of the victors of 1815, was never summoned by France to the test of arms. England's victory at Waterloo had exalted her to the greatest height of military power ever attained by her—for since that day her wars have been almost entirely against tribes of negroes and savages, and of a kind which Wellington would have despised;²⁶⁰—and it was followed by forty years' immunity from European complications and from trouble through the innumerable revolutions going on upon the Continent. It was not until the rise of the Second Empire in France that England was again entangled in a Con-

²⁶⁰ "My lords," said Wellington in Parliament, January 10, 1838, "I entreat you, and I entreat the Government, not to forget that a great country like this can have no such thing as a little war." The particular inglorious war which then threatened England was the "opium war" with China. Speaking of its conclusion in 1842, Mr. Justin McCarthy, in his *History of Our Own Times*, says, "The Duke of Wellington moved the vote of thanks in the House of Lords. He could hardly help, one would think, forming in his mind as he spoke an occa-

sional contrast between the services which he asked the House to honour, and the sort of warfare which it had been his glorious duty to engage in so long. The Duke of Wellington was a simple-minded man, with little sense of humour. He did not probably perceive himself the irony that others might have seen in the fact that the conqueror of Napoleon, the victor in years of warfare against soldiers unsurpassed in history, should have had to move a vote of thanks to the fleet and army which triumphed over the unarmed, helpless, child-like Chinese."

tinental war by the devices of the new Emperor ; and in her secondary part in that alliance, and the chafing of Englishmen under what not a few of them felt to be its humiliation, Napoleonism was thought by many to have exacted from her former conqueror atonement for Waterloo. As to France when left to herself, her phenomenal recuperative power—which no amount of bad rule at home or repression from abroad seems able to overtax—has enabled her to endure, without apparent exhaustion, a bewildering succession of royal, imperial, “provisional,” and republican governments, which are usually undermined by conspiracies, always dependent on armies, and at intervals diversified by anarchy and tumult. What is to be the political future of this great nation is a problem which it passes human sagacity to forecast.²⁶¹

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²⁶¹ The difficulty of finding any time at which to summarize the past or predict the future of French political life can hardly be better illustrated than by a passage from the Earl of Albemarle's *Fifty Years of My Life*. It was in August, 1851, that the autobiographer went to Paris as part of a deputation representing the London municipality, and visited a theatre where he was assured that he should “see Frenchmen enjoy a hearty laugh at their own expense.” The piece he beheld was an extravaganza entitled *Les Caméléons ; ou, Soixante ans en soixante minutes, en six tableaux et demi*. His summary of it is as follows :—“By way of prologue, the god Proteus appears as cicerone to a sort of Prince Rasselas from the Happy Valley on a visit to a people especially under the influence of that sea-deity. This introduces the ‘Premier Tableau,’ which is in-

tended to represent the court of Louis XVI. The walls of the royal apartment, which are adorned with silver fleurs-de-lys, are white—the first hue of the Caméléons. The courtiers are also in white from top to toe. They are all on pleasure bent, and are singing and dancing, without bestowing one thought on the morrow ;

‘Du présent il faut jouir,
Rions de l’avenir ;’

when, lo ! ‘le Deuxième Tableau’ (First French Revolution). Scene—Paris. On every house is inscribed ‘Prison.’ The white courtiers have become Red Republicans, and their features undergo as complete a transformation as their dresses. The dance of pleasure is changed into that of the *Carmagnole*. ‘Nous sommes libres !’ shouts one. ‘Oui,’ respond the rest. ‘Egaux ?’ ‘Oui.’ ‘Frères ?’ ‘Nous sommes

Consequences of Waterloo.

frères ?' They now say simultaneously, 'Mon frère, tu m'es suspect.' Each grasps his neighbour furiously by the collar, and sings like a maniac a *vaudeville*, the burden of which is—

'En prison
Toute la nation.'

They have all dragged each other off to prison, with the exception of a fat little Caméléon, who, having nobody else to lay hold of, exclaims, 'Je me suis suspect,' seizes his own throat, and carries himself off to the air of

'En prison.'

'Troisième Tableau' (First Empire). Scene—An open field; a camp in the background. Grouped as trophies are flags of all the nations of Europe (those of England alone excepted). The Caméléons have become tricolours. They wear the uniforms of grenadiers of the Old Imperial Guard. They have a thoroughly *blasé* air. By way of passing the time, it is suggested that they should take some capital city. A map is brought. 'Let us take Amsterdam.' 'We took that last night.' 'Madrid! C'est gentil à prendre.' 'We took Madrid the first thing this morning.' 'But how stupid of us!' says one of them: 'we have forgotten Berlin.' To a soldier—'Va prendre Berlin!' 'And then Vienna! How droll nobody ever thought of Vienna.' To another soldier, 'Va prendre Vienne!' The first soldier comes back: 'Nous avons conquis la Prusse.' The second: 'Nous avons conquis l'Autriche.' The preceding speaker then says with a yawn, 'Since we have no more kingdoms to conquer, nothing is left us but to repose on our laurels; but first let us raise a memorial to

our achievements.' The Caméléons throw their firelocks into a large cauldron, from which there straightway rises a representation of the column in the Place Vendôme. = 'Quatrième Tableau' (Restoration of the Elder Bourbons). Scene—The fleurs-de-lys apartment. Here we have a crown and sceptre, a large genealogical tree, ribands and decorations of the order of St. Louis. The band plays royalist airs. A *vaudeville* is sung, of which the refrain is—

'C'est aujourd'hui certain
Le droit divin.'

The Caméléons are first black, implying that the Church party has regained its ascendancy, but they afterwards resume the white. = 'Tableau Cinquième' (the Orleans dynasty). This scene is a squib on the wholesale stockjobbing which marked the reign of Louis Philippe. The Caméléons are blazing in gold and silver. The conversation turns wholly on scrip. Fortune, blindfolded, and standing on a wheel, passes and repasses over the stage. 'We are rolling in riches,' is the cry; 'but we want a change. Let us have a radical reform, and celebrate it by a banquet.' A table is drawn across the stage. Fortune appears for a moment, her wheel makes a retrograde movement, and the table suddenly changes into a barricade. This brings us to = 'Tableau Sixième' (the anarchy of 1848). Scene—A street in Paris. The street lamps smashed to pieces, columns overthrown, trees cut down, 'maison à vendre' on every house. The Caméléons, once more Red Republicans, pass repeatedly to and fro. To make confusion worse con-

founded, the *rappel* is continually beating to arms. The Caméléons are in all the colours of the rainbow. One runs against the other. 'Pardon, monsieur.' 'Je ne m'appelle pas Monsieur.' 'Pardon, citoyen, what is the name of this place?' It is 'La Place de Louis XV,' cries one. 'Pardon, c'est la Place de la Révolution,' says another. 'Pardon, c'est la Place de la Concorde,' says a third. 'It is now high time that'—here the actor looks towards the prompter, who,

after a considerable row, is dragged out of his eggshell, and shows a blank page. The audience is angrily addressed from all parts of the house. The author is called for, and appears in the form of a small boy, who tells the audience that the history of the Caméléons stops there, but, without committing himself, ventures to hope that he may soon be able to announce 'le plus heureux dénouement.' = Four months later," concludes Lord Albemarle, "was the famous *coup d'état*."

Conse-
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Waterloo.

WATERLOO POETRY.

CANTO III.

Byron.

STANZA XXI.

“THERE was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium’s capital had gather’d then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o’er fair women and brave men ;
A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look’d love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell ;
But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell.

XXII.

“Did ye not hear it ?—No ; ’twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o’er the stony street ;
On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;
No sleep till morn, when youth and pleasure meet,
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet—
But, hark ! that heavy sound breaks in once more
As if the clouds its echo would repeat ;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
Arm ! arm ! it is—it is—the cannon’s opening roar !

XXIII.

“Within a window’d niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick’s fated chieftain ; he did hear
That sound the first amid the festival,
And caught its tone with death’s prophetic ear ;
And when they smiled because he deem’d it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell ;
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Byron.

XXIV.

“ Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
 And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
 Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness ;
 And there were sudden partings, such as press
 The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
 Which ne'er might be repeated ; who could guess
 If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
 Since upon nights so sweet such awful morn could rise !

XXV.

“ And there was mounting in hot haste : the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ;
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar ;
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star ;
 While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
 Or whispering, with white lips — ‘ The foe ! they come ! they come ! ’

XXVI.

“ And wild and high the ‘ Cameron’s gathering ’ rose !
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn’s hills
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes :—
 How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
 Savage and shrill ! But with the breath which fills
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
 With the fierce native daring which instils
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,
 And Evan’s, Donald’s fame rings in each clansman’s ears !

XXVII.

“ And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
 Dewy with nature’s tear-drops, as they pass,
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e’er grieves,
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas !
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
 Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII.

"Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
 Last eye in beauty's circle proudly gay,
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
 Battle's magnificently-stern array !
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
 The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
 Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent ! "

Byron.

About the passage in *Childe Harold*, which holds indisputably the first place among the poems on the Battle of Waterloo, there is little to be recorded in the way of literary history. The stanzas in question occur near the opening of the third canto of the poem, and were written at a period very eventful to the poet. The two previous cantos—which he seems at the time to have considered as possibly completing the poem—were composed, he says in his preface, "for the most part amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe." They were published in 1812, when Lord Byron was but twenty-four years of age. During the years immediately following there ensued the twice-repeated downfall of Napoleon's fortunes and the domestic calamities which drove Byron from England.¹ It was on April

¹ During this period Byron wrote (April 10, 1814) his *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte*—an outburst of bitter scorn at the fallen Emperor's consenting to survive his power. This production subsequently embarrassed him. On June 12, 1815, he enclosed to Tom Moore "an epistle received this morning from I know not whom. . . The writer," he observes, "must be a rare fellow." This anonymous correspondent declared himself "quite vexed that you have not cancelled the *Ode to Buonaparte*."

It certainly was prematurely written, without thought or reflection. . . . See if you cannot make amends for your folly, and consider that, in almost every respect, human nature is the same in every clime and in every period, and don't act the part of a *foolish boy*." Byron, however, had made his recantation in anticipation of this injunction ; for, on March 17, 1815, on hearing of Napoleon's return from Elba, he wrote to Moore, "I can forgive the rogue for utterly falsifying every line of mine *Ode*—

Byron.

25, 1816, that he left his own country for the last time, and journeyed through Flanders and along the Rhine to Switzerland, where—at Diodati, on the Lake of Geneva—he wrote the third canto during the months of May, June, and July.

Lord Byron's route, Moore observes in his *Life*, "is best traced in his own matchless verses, which leave a portion of their glory on all that they touch, and lend to scenes already clothed with immortality by nature and by history the no less durable associations of undying song." Such a tribute Byron paid to the field of Waterloo. "I went on horseback twice over the field," he wrote, "comparing it with my recollections of similar scenes. As a plain, Waterloo seems marked out for the scene of some great action, though that may be mere imagination. I have viewed with attention those of Plataea, Troy, Mantinea, Leuctra, Chæronea, and Marathon; and the field around Mont St. Jean and Hougomont appears to want little but a better cause, and that indefinite but impressive halo which the lapse of ages throws around a celebrated spot, to vie in interest with any or all of these, except, perhaps, the last mentioned." On the evening after this inspection Byron wrote, and next morning transcribed into the album of Mrs. Pryce Gordon, then resident in Brussels, the first two of the four stanzas which immediately precede those usually quoted upon the eve of Waterloo:—

which I take to be the last and uttermost stretch of human magnanimity. Do you remember," he proceeds illustratively, "the story of a certain Abbé, who wrote a treatise on the Swedish Constitution, and proved it indissoluble and eternal? Just as he had corrected the last sheet, news came that Gustavus III had destroyed this immortal government. 'Sir,' quoth the Abbé 'the

King of Sweden may overthrow the constitution, but not my book!!' I think," concludes Byron, "*of* the Abbé, but not *with* him." = It should be added that, during the years referred to in the text, Byron made five contributions to the poetical literature upon Napoleon's final overthrow—four of them "from the French."

“Stop! for thy tread is on an Empire’s dust!
 An earthquake’s spoil is sepulchred below!
 Is the spot mark’d with no colossal bust,
 Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
 None; but the moral’s truth tells simpler so,
 As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
 How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
 And is this all the world has gain’d by thee,
 Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?”

“And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
 The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
 How in an hour the power which gave annals
 Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
*In ‘pride of place’ here last the eagle flew,
 Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,*²
 Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
 Ambition’s life and labours all were vain;
 He wears the shatter’d links of the world’s broken chain.

² The lines italicised above read, in the first draft,

“Here his last flight the haughty eagle flew,
 Then tore, with bloody beak, the fatal plain.”

The verses were read by an artist, Mr. R. R. Reinagle, a friend of Major Gordon’s, on a visit to Brussels, shortly after they were written, whereupon he drew a chained eagle grasping the earth with his talons. “I had occasion,” says Major Gordon, “to write to his Lordship, and mentioned having got this clever artist to draw a vignette to his beau-

tiful lines, and the liberty he had taken by altering the action of the eagle. In reply to this, he wrote to me:—‘Reinagle is a better poet and a better ornithologist than I am; eagles, and all birds of prey, attack with their talons, and not with their beaks, and I have altered the line thus:—

‘Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain.

This is, I think,’ continued Byron, ‘a better line, besides its poetical justice.’” And Major Gordon observes, “I need hardly add, when I communicated this flattering compliment to the painter, that he was highly gratified.”=Byron’s writing this passage on the day of his visit

to the field of Waterloo bears out a statement concerning his methods of composition afterwards recorded in Tom Moore’s *Diary* (July 3, 1821). It was at a dinner at Holland House, when the practice of authors in observation and description came under discussion, and Lord Holland re-

Byron.

“Fit retribution ! Gaul may champ the bit
 And foam in fetters ;—but is earth more free ?
 Did nations combat to make One submit ;
 Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty ?
 What ! shall reviving thralldom again be
 The patch’d-up idol of enlighten’d days ?
 Shall we, who struck the lion down, shall we
 Pay the wolf homage ? proffering lowly gaze
 And servile knees to thrones ? No ; prove before ye praise !

“If not, o’er one fallen despot boast no more !
 In vain fair cheeks were furrow’d with hot tears
 For Europe’s flowers long rooted up before
 The trampler of her vineyards ; in vain years
 Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
 Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
 Of roused-up millions ; all that most endears
 Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes the sword,
 Such as Harmodius drew on Athens’ tyrant lord.”

The third canto of *Childe Harold*, as has been said, was completed in Switzerland. Of its general tone Sir Walter Scott, in allusion to the author’s domestic griefs, wrote, “The commentary through which the meaning of this melancholy tale is rendered obvious is still in vivid remembrance ; for the errors of those who excel their fellows in gifts and accomplishments are not soon forgotten.” Moore, recording Byron’s history at this

marked, “‘Mad.de Staël never looked at anything ; passed by scenery of every kind without a glance at it ; which did not, however, prevent her describing it.’ I [Moore] said that Lord Byron could not describe anything which he had not actually under his eyes, and that he did it either on the spot or immediately after.” Karl Elze, in his *Life of Byron*, makes a similar observation —“It is intimately connected with

the character of improvisation which belongs to the poetry of Byron that he could write only on the very spot ; or at least that he must receive on the spot inspiration for his poetry —and then, almost immediately, *fervente calamo*, commit it to paper. . . . All his poems were written, when the fit of inspiration was upon him, with the utmost rapidity, and as it were at one cast.”

time, said, "The effect of the late struggle on his mind, in stirring up all his resources and energies, was visible in the great activity of his genius during the whole of this period, and the rich variety, both in character and colouring, of the works with which it teemed. Besides the third canto of *Childe Harold*, and *The Prisoner of Chillon*, he produced also his two poems, *Darkness* and *The Dream*. . . Those verses, too, entitled *The Incantation*, which he introduced afterwards, without any connection with the subject, into *Manfred*, were also (at least the less bitter portion of them) the production of this period; and as they were written soon after the last fruitless attempt at reconciliation, it is needless to say who was in his thoughts while he penned some of the opening stanzas." Byron himself wrote from Venice to Murray, his publisher—on January 24, 1817, before the published work had reached him,—“Mrs. Leigh [his sister] tells me that most of her friends prefer the first two cantos. I do not know whether this be the general opinion or not (it is not *hers*); but it is natural it should be so. I, however, think differently, which is natural also; but who is right, or who is wrong, is of very little consequence.” Soon after this—on January 28—he wrote to Moore, “I tremble for the ‘magnificence’ which you attribute to the new *Childe Harold*. I am glad you like it; it is a fine indistinct piece of poetical desolation, and my favourite. I was half mad during the time of its composition, between metaphysics, mountains, lakes, love inextinguishable, thoughts unutterable, and the nightmare of my own delinquencies. I should, many a good day, have blown my brains out, but for the recollection that it would have given pleasure to my mother-in-law; and, even *then*, if I could have been certain to haunt her. But I won’t dwell upon these trifling family matters.”

Byron.

From the accounts which have thus been given of the genesis of this canto, it would scarcely have occurred to either its writer or his readers that its inspiration was derived from Wordsworth. Such, however, was the modest judgment of the Lake poet. It was in the autumn of 1820 that the latter visited Paris, where Tom Moore met him at a dinner given by Canning, and immediately set him down, in his *Diary*, as “a man to hold forth, one who does not understand the *give and take* of conversation.” Two days later (October 27, 1820) Moore made this entry in his *Diary*:

“Wordsworth came at half-past eight, and stopped to breakfast. Talked a good deal. Spoke of Byron’s plagiarisms from him; the whole third canto of *Childe Harold* founded on his style and sentiments. The feeling of natural objects which is there expressed, not caught by B. from nature herself, but from him (Wordsworth), and spoiled in the transmission. *Tintern Abbey* the source of it all; from which same poem too the celebrated passage about Solitude, in the first canto of *Childe Harold*, is (he said) taken, with this difference, that what is naturally expressed by him, has been worked by Byron into a laboured and antithetical sort of declamation.”

Upon which Lord John Russell, as Moore’s editor, observes in a note, “There is some resemblance between *Tintern Abbey* and *Childe Harold*; but, as Voltaire said of Homer and Virgil, ‘When they tell me “Homer made Virgil,” I answer, “Then it is his best work,”’ so of Wordsworth it may be said, ‘If he wrote the third canto of *Childe Harold*, it is his best work.’”³

³ Moore—who in later years devised for Wordsworth’s express benefit the adjective “soliloquacious” (*Diary*, Feb. 20, 1835)—gives this incident from the same visit to Paris, related to him by Lady Davy, the wife of Sir Humphry Davy:—“We

talked of Wordsworth’s exceedingly high opinion of himself; and she mentioned that one day, in a large party, Wordsworth, without anything having been previously said that could lead to the subject, called out suddenly from the top of the

After the Battle of Waterloo and the restoration of peace English tourists flocked to the Continent, and among them Walter (not yet Sir Walter) Scott. Immediately on receiving news of the victory, a friend of his, the eminent surgeon Sir Charles Bell, had repaired to Brussels to lend his aid to the wounded; and had written to his brother in Edinburgh an account of scenes consequent upon the battle so graphic that, "When I read it," said Scott, "it set me on fire." A wedding, which Scott could not neglect attending, on July 24, 1815, prevented his instant departure; but on July 27, with a small party of friends, he set out from Edinburgh, and reached Belgium in the beginning of August. At Brussels he found the remnant of the British garrison, and also his old acquaintance, Major

table to the bottom, in his most epic tone, 'Davy!' and, on Davy's putting forth his head in awful expectation of what was coming, said, 'Do you know the reason why I published the *White Doe* in quarto?' 'No, what was it?' 'To show the world my own opinion of it.' Long after this (August 8, 1837), Moore met Wordsworth at a dinner at Rogers', in London; and, "On my mentioning that I had met with a young man at a café in Paris who had seen him (Wordsworth) in Italy, he asked me who he was; and on my answering that I did not know his name, the sublime Laker replied, 'Oh, *Virgilium tantum vidi*,' but immediately conscious of the assumption of the speech, turned it off with a laugh." Carlyle had a similar experience of Wordsworth, and set down his impression, which is embodied in the *Reminiscences*, published by Mr. Froude after Car-

lyle's death, in 1881. The conversation occurred at a London dinner party in 1840:—"I got him upon the subject of great poets, who I thought might be admirable equally to us both; but was rather mistaken, as I gradually found. Pope's partial failure I was prepared for; less for the narrowish limits visible in Milton and others. I tried him with Burns, of whom he had sung tender recognition; but Burns also turned out to be a limited, inferior creature, any genius he had a theme for one's pathos rather; even Shakespeare himself had his blind sides, his limitations; gradually it became apparent to me that of transcendent unlimited there was, to this critic, probably but one specimen known—Wordsworth himself!"=One need not necessarily revise his admiration for *Childe Harold* because of Wordsworth's faith in the superior poetical methods pursued in *Tintern Abbey*.

Scott.

Pryce Gordon, already quoted, who wrote of this visit :—

“Sir Walter Scott accepted my services to conduct him to Waterloo: the General’s aide-de-camp was also of the party. He made no secret of his having undertaken to write something on the battle; and perhaps he took the greater interest on this account in everything that he saw. . . . In our rounds we fell in with M. de Costar, with whom he got into conversation. This man had attracted so much notice by his pretended story of being about the person of Napoleon that he was of too much importance to be passed by: I did not, indeed, know as much of this fellow’s charlatanism at that time as afterwards, when I saw him confronted with a blacksmith of La Belle Alliance, who had been his companion in a hiding-place ten miles from the place during the whole day, a fact which he could not deny. But he had got up a tale so plausible and so profitable, that he could afford to bestow hush-money on the companion of his flight, so that the imposition was but little known; and strangers continued to be gulled.”

That Scott, like many others who wrote the first and enduring descriptions of Waterloo, was thoroughly taken in by this impostor is shown by the letter which he wrote at the time to the Duke of Buccleuch,—“I spoke long with a shrewd Flemish peasant, called John de Costar, whom he [Napoleon] had seized upon as his guide, and who remained beside him the whole day, and afterwards accompanied him in his flight as far as Charleroi.”⁴ After this visit Scott moved, deliberately, towards Paris, where he was received with marked cordiality by the magnates there assembled—Lords Wellington, Cathcart, Castlereagh, and Aberdeen, the Emperor Alexander, Platoff, Blücher, and others. Thence he returned to London, where, on September 14, he had his last meeting with Lord Byron, at which the

⁴ For the full extent of Scott’s deception by Costar’s—or Lacoste’s—pretensions, see note 145, p. 232.

latter seemed much out of sorts, because, as Charles Mathews, who was present, suggests, "Waterloo did not delight him, probably—and Scott could talk or think of scarcely anything else." From London he returned home, and wrote to his friend Morritt, on October 2, "Yesterday and to-day I began, from necessity, to prune verses, and have been correcting proofs of my little attempt at a poem on Waterloo. It will be out this week." It was, accordingly, quickly published, and the author contributed the profits of its first edition to the fund for the relief of the widows and children of those who fell in the battle. It was dedicated "*To her Grace the Duchess of Wellington, Princess of Waterloo, etc., etc., etc.*," and was preceded by this

"*Advertisement.*—It may be some apology for the imperfections of this poem, that it was composed hastily, and during a short tour upon the Continent, where the author's labours were liable to frequent interruptions; but its best apology is that it was written for the purpose of assisting the Waterloo subscription."

The apology, no doubt, is adequate; but the merit of the poem is not such that Scott's admirers need desire any addition to the extracts already made in the notes appended to the narrative of the battle. Indeed, as a whole, the production justified a *mot* which was current at the time,—that "Scott fell in *The Field of Waterloo*"—a sentiment which Lord Erskine embodied in the couplet—

"Of all who fell, by sabre or by shot,
Not one fell half so flat as Walter Scott."

For *The Dance of Death*, which he contributed to the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1815, there is less justification and no room whatever for praise. It is rather

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a travesty than a mechanical perpetuation of the manner of *Marmion*, and appears to have been a perfunctory production, hastily and carelessly struck off as a piece of literary job-work. A specimen of it has been quoted on page 142.

Among the further products of Scott's continental tour were several translations from the French, which appeared in *Paul's Letters* and the *Edinburgh Annual Register*. To one of these, which he calls *The Romance of Dunois*, is prefixed this explanation:—

“The original of this little romance makes part of a manuscript collection of French songs, probably compiled by some young officer, which was found on the Field of Waterloo, so much stained with clay and with blood as sufficiently to indicate what had been the fate of its late owner. The song is popular in France, and is rather a good specimen of the style of composition to which it belongs. The translation is strictly literal.”

Queen
Hortense.

As to the latter particular, the translator greatly flattered himself; for the simple easy flow and smooth rhymes of the French have not disappeared more completely than its natural unlaboured expression, for which the translator substituted a dilution of hackneyed and conventional poetical flummery. Scott did not know at the time, what he afterwards learned, that the poem was the work of Queen Hortense, who also set it to music. When her son became Napoleon III, *Partant pour la Syrie* was revived and became one of the favourite military airs of the Second Empire. These circumstances and its history as above recited must be the justification for introducing it here, for its theme has no reference to Waterloo. An air was made for Scott's translation by G. F. Graham and contributed to Thomson's *Select Melodies*. Queen Hortense's and Sir Walter's versions are as follow, the long lines of the English

giving but half as many rhymes as the French. The original of the latter, both as to words and metrical arrangement, is substituted for the mutilated rendering printed by Scott.

Scott.
Queen
Hortense.

“ROMANCE CHEVALRESQUE.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>“Partant pour la Syrie,
Le jeune et beau Dunois
Venait prier Marie
De bénir ses exploits.
‘Faites, reine immortelle,’
Lui dit-il en partant,
‘Que j’aime la plus belle,
Et sois le plus vaillant.’</p> <p>“Il trace sur la pierre
Le serment de l’honneur,
Et va suivre à la guerre
Le comte, son seigneur.
Au noble vœu fidèle,
Il dit, en combattant,
‘Amour à la plus belle !
Honneur au plus vaillant !’</p> | <p>“‘Je te dois la victoire,
Dunois,’ dit le seigneur.
‘Puisque tu fais ma gloire,
Je ferai ton bonheur.
De ma fille Isabelle
Sois l’époux à l’instant,
Car elle est la plus belle,
Et toi le plus vaillant.’</p> <p>“A l’autel de Marie,
Ils contractent tous deux
Cette union chérie,
Qui seule rend heureux.
Chacun dans la chapelle
Disait, en les voyant,
‘Amour à la plus belle !
Honneur au plus vaillant !’</p> |
|---|---|

“ROMANCE OF DUNOIS.

- “It was Dunois, the young and brave, was bound for Palestine,
But first he made his orizons before Saint Mary’s shrine :
‘And grant, immortal Queen of Heaven,’ was still the soldier’s
prayer,
‘That I may prove the bravest knight, and love the fairest fair.’
- “His oath of honour on the shrine he graved it with his sword,
And followed to the Holy Land the banner of his lord,
Where, faithful to his noble vow, his war-cry filled the air—
‘Be honoured aye the bravest knight, beloved the fairest fair !’
- “They owed the conquest to his arm, and then his liege lord said,
‘The heart that has for honour beat by bliss must be repaid,—
My daughter Isabelle and thou shall be a wedded pair,
For thou art bravest of the brave, she fairest of the fair.’

Scott.

Queen
Hortense.

“And then they bound the holy knot before St. Mary’s shrine,
That makes a paradise on earth if hearts and hands combine ;
And every lord and lady bright that were in chapel there
Cried, ‘Honoured be the bravest knight, beloved the fairest
fair!’”

It would be almost cruel to collate these two, were it not for the extreme complacency of Scott’s own self-content expressed in *Paul’s Letters*. “I have taken more pains,” he says, “respecting these poems than their intrinsic poetical merit can be supposed to deserve, either in the original or in the English version; but I cannot divest them from the interest which they have acquired by the place and manner in which they were obtained.” Queen Hortense’s *chanson*, it is true, is but a trifle, yet a pretty and graceful trifle, in which there is not a single redundancy of expression, a wasted word, or a phrase that could be bettered. But the comparison which Scott solicits with his “strictly literal” translation discloses these achievements—(1) he is grossly ungrammatical in the 1st line of his 1st stanza, in the 1st and 3d of the 2d stanza, and in the 3d of the 4th stanza; (2) his “and” and “still” in the 3d line 1st stanza are inconsequent and silly; (3) he imports, without any suggestion from the original, such base bits of poetical slang as “bravest of the brave,” “fairest fair,” “wedded pair,” “bound the holy knot,” “his war-cry filled the air,” “owed the conquest to his arm,” “made his orizons;” (4) he constantly expands a terse phrase into a platitude: *e.g.* in every recurrence of the refrain, or where “*cette union chérie qui seule rend heureux*” is flattened out into “the holy knot . . . that makes a paradise on earth if hearts and hands combine;” or where “*chacun à la chapelle*” is diluted into “every lord and lady bright that were [*sic*] in chapel there;” (5) he invents, absolutely without justification,

the trashy 2d line of the 3d stanza. In short, this "strictly literal" translation would suffice to prove, were it not otherwise proved, that by this time Scott as a poet had come to live upon his previously-earned reputation; that, after *Waverley* and *Guy Mannering* had opened to him a new path, he was content to foist upon the public rhythmical slop shamefully unworthy of his powers.⁵ In the present instance, Queen Hor-

Scott.

Queen
Hortense.

⁵ Hazlitt, in his essay on Scott in *The Spirit of the Age*, congratulates the successful novelist on turning away from his threadbare poetizings. "The Author of *Waverley*," he says, "has got rid of the tagging of rhymes, the eking out of syllables, the supplying of epithets, the colours of style. . . . His poetry was a lady's waiting-maid, dressed out in cast-off finery; his prose is a beautiful rustic nymph, that, like Dorothea in *Don Quixote*, when she is surprised with dishevelled tresses bathing her naked feet in the brook, looks round her abashed at the admiration her charms have excited." = Heine speaks of Scott as an "ex-poet" in a different sense from Hazlitt's criticism. At one time the German critic was among his warmest admirers, and, in *The North Sea*, in his *Pictures of Travel* (1826), said, "Of all great writers Byron is just the one whose writings excite in me the least passion, while Scott, on the contrary, in his every book, gladdens, tranquillizes, and strengthens my heart." Even at this time he had misgivings about Scott's as yet unpublished *Life of Napoleon*, observing, "All those who honour the genius of Scott must tremble for him, for such a book may easily prove to be the Moscow of a reputa-

tion which he has won with weary labour." The book appeared, and in his comments upon it in his *English Fragments* (1828), Heine says, "Strange! the dead Emperor is, even in his grave, the bane of the Britons, and through him Britannia's greatest poet has lost his laurels! —He *was* Britannia's greatest poet, let people say and imagine what they will. . . . Now, all this popular wealth of the British poet is at an end, and he, whose change was so current that the Duchess and the cobbler's wife received it with the same interest, has now become a poor Walter Scott. His destiny recalls the legend of the mountain elves, who, mockingly benevolent, gave money to poor people which was bright and profitable so long as they spent it wisely, but which turned to mere dust when applied to unworthy purposes. Sack by sack we opened Walter Scott's new load —and lo! instead of gleaming smiling pence, there was nothing but idle dust, and dust again! He was justly punished by those mountain elves of Parnassus, the Muses, who, like all noble-minded women, are enthusiastic Napoleonists, and who were consequently doubly enraged at the misuse of the spirit-treasure which had been loaned. . . . The

Scott.
 Queen
 Hortense.

tense's little verses can endure the closest scrutiny without disclosing a flaw—Sir Walter's, if unsigned, would go into the waste-basket of a village newspaper. One may even imagine that Scott's "traduction," as the French would call it, of Queen Hortense's *chanson* was what Thackeray had in mind when he "improved" *Wapping Old Stairs* into *The Knightly Guerdon*.

The propensity to slight his literary work which is manifested in all his Waterloo poetry brings into view an unpleasant side of Scott's character. It was thrown into a strong light by the publication of Lord Macaulay's *Life and Letters*, which contain a letter to Macvey Napier (June 26, 1838) declining an invitation to write a review of Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. Macaulay said—

"I have not, from the little I do know of him [Scott], formed so high an opinion of his character as most people seem to entertain, and as it would be expedient for the *Edinburgh Review* to express. . . . In politics a bitter and unscrupulous partisan ; profuse and ostentatious in expense ; agitated by the hopes and fears of a gambler ; perpetually sacrificing the perfection of his compositions, and the durability of his fame, to his eagerness for money ; writing with the slovenly haste of Dryden, in order to satisfy wants which were not, like those of Dryden, caused by circumstances beyond his control, but which were produced by his extravagant waste or rapacious speculation—this is the way in which he appears to me. I am sorry for it, for I sincerely admire the greater part of his works ; but I cannot think him a high-minded man, or a man of very strict

English have merely murdered the Emperor—but Walter Scott sold him. It was a real Scotch trick, a regular specimen of Scottish national manners, and we see that Scotch avarice is still the same old dirty spirit as ever, and has not changed much since the days of Naseby, when the Scotch sold their own

King, who had confided himself to their protection, for the sum of four hundred thousand pounds sterling. That King was the same Charles Stuart whom the bards of Caledonia now sing so gloriously—the Englishman murders, but the Scotchman sells and sings."

principle. Now, these are opinions which, however softened, it would be highly unpopular to publish, particularly in a Scotch review."

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How thoroughly unpopular they were among Scott's admirers—and his admirers would be as numerous as his readers had he but written less—was shown by the indignation elicited when, years after Macaulay's death, this letter was made public. *The Pall Mall Gazette*,—speaking moderately, and claiming that Macaulay's objections to Scott "show how little he understood him,"—gave this defence:—"Alas! he little knew how slightly Scott valued either the durability of his fame or the perfection of his compositions. To be Scott of Abbotsford was more in his eyes than to be the author of a dozen *Waverleys*. . . It was for the sake of realizing this position . . . that Scott was so eager to add fame to fame and thousands of pounds to thousands." It was just after Macaulay's *Life* had produced this and similar explanations that Miss Harriet Martineau's *Autobiography* was published (1877), containing a suggestion as to the genuineness of the Abbotsford sentiment. Under date of 1838—the year of Macaulay's letter,—she wrote of a tour in Scotland—

"We saw Abbotsford and Dryburgh under great advantages of weather; but my surprise at the smallness and toy-character of Abbotsford was extreme. It was impossible but that both Scott and Lockhart must know what a good Scotch house is; and their glorification of this place shakes one's faith in their other descriptions."

The truth seems to be that the very imaginative faculty which gives charm to the great romancer's pages was linked with a propensity to feudalistic make-believe that led him to do things which showed, as Macaulay put it, a want of high-mindedness. That he dearly loved a

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lord no reader of his poems or novels need be told ; but that he should abase himself to win the smiles of exalted rank is very unpleasant to hear. Yet this unpleasant thing is intimated rather than clearly shown in Mr. Richard H. Hutton's volume on *Sir Walter Scott*, and is to be traced out in Lockhart's *Life*.

It was in April, 1806, that he was admitted to the acquaintance of the Princess of Wales—afterwards Queen Caroline, of unsavoury celebrity,—and wrote thus of it to his friend George Ellis:—"I had also the honour of dining with a fair friend of yours at Blackheath, an honour which I shall very long remember. She is an enchanting princess, who dwells in an enchanted palace, and I cannot help thinking that her prince must labour under some malignant spell when he denies himself her society." Remembering the "honour,"⁶ as he had promised, Scott took occasion to appear publicly as the champion of the Princess—whose conjugal difficulties were already a public scandal and a theme for much tall talk—by writing a song which James Ballantyne sang at a dinner given at Edinburgh, June 27, 1806, in honour of Lord Melville, in which he introduced this stanza—

"Our King, too—our Princess—I dare not say more, sir,—
 May Providence watch them with mercy and might !
 While there's one Scottish hand that can wag a claymore, sir,
 They shall ne'er want a friend to stand up for their right.
 Be damn'd he that dare not—
 For my part I'll spare not
 To beauty afflicted a tribute to give :
 Fill it up steadily,
 Drink it off readily,—
 Here's to the Princess, and long may she live !"

⁶ For another illustration of Scott's puzzling ideas of honour, see note 249, p. 382.

Soon after, Scott found another opportunity of proclaiming himself the admirer, not only of the Princess, but of all that belonged to her, by forcing into the *Introduction to Canto III* of *Marmion* a tribute to her father, the Duke of Brunswick—a man personally as bad as the other bad men and women of his race,—who had fallen at Jena. This he communicated to the Princess in February, 1807, before the publication of the poem—"a tribute so grateful to her feelings," says Lockhart, "that she herself shortly after sent the poet an elegant silver vase as a memorial of her thankfulness." But when the next Duke of Brunswick, her brother, fell at Quatre Bras, Scott excluded him from the necrological list that swells the *Field of Waterloo*. He had meantime been honoured with the recognition of the Prince Regent, who, in 1813, had offered him the laureateship. Scott had allowed this to go to Southey, but had eagerly grasped at the friendship of what he considered a superior quality of royalty to that of the proscribed Princess, who thenceforth, so far as Scott was concerned and in spite of his song, *did* "want a friend to stand up for her right;" and a dinner given him by the Regent in March, 1815, quite effaced the recollection of the Princess's entertainment which he had intended to "very long remember." The Prince called him "Walter," Lockhart tells us, "as was his custom with those he most delighted to honour," and "sent him a gold snuff-box, set in brilliants, with a medallion of his Royal Highness' head on the lid, 'as a testimony' (writes Mr. Adam, in transmitting it) 'of the high opinion his Royal Highness entertains of your genius and merit.'" The conquest was complete. Scott thenceforth joined the chorus of the courtiers in reviling the Princess whose hospitalities and gifts he had

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received as an "honour."⁷ He told James Ballantyne that the Regent was "the first gentleman he had seen—certainly the first *English* gentleman of his day ;—there was something about him which, independently of the *prestige*, the 'divinity' which hedges a King, marked him as standing entirely by himself." At a later day he wrote in his journal :—

"He converses himself with so much ease and elegance that you lose thoughts of the Prince in admiring the well-bred and accomplished gentleman. He is in many respects the model of a British Monarch—has little inclination to try experiments on government otherwise than through his Ministers—sincerely, I believe, desires the good of his subjects—is kind towards the distressed, and moves and speaks 'every inch a King.'"

Scott was not spared to read the *Book of Snobs*. In that work Thackeray defines that "He who meanly admires mean things is a Snob," and in his illustration he depicts "the great and lamented Gorgius IV, . . . the first gentleman in Europe." He proceeds :—

"What is it to be a gentleman ? Is it to be honest, to be gentle, to be generous, to be brave, to be wise, and, possessing all these qualities, to exercise them in the most graceful outward manner ? Ought a gentleman to be a loyal son, a true husband, and honest father ? Ought his life to be decent—his bills to be paid—his tastes to be high and elegant—his aims in

⁷ One extract from a letter from Scott to his brother Thomas (July 23, 1820), which is printed by Lockhart, shows his recreancy to his original patron in a very contemptible light. "The Queen," he wrote, "is making an awful bustle, and though by all accounts her conduct has been most abandoned and beastly, she has got the whole mob for her partisans, who call her injured innocence and what not. She has courage enough to dare the worst, and

a most decided desire to be revenged of *him*, which, by the way, can scarce be wondered at. If she had as many followers of high as of low degree (in proportion), and funds to equip them, I should not be surprised to see her fat bottom in a pair of buckskins, and at the head of an army—God mend us all. The things said of her are beyond all usual profligacy. Nobody of any fashion visits her."

life lofty and noble? In a word, ought not the Biography of a First Gentleman in Europe to be of such a nature that it might be read in Young Ladies' Schools with advantage, and studied with profit in the Seminaries of Young Gentlemen? I put this question to all instructors of youth—to Mrs. Ellis and the Women of England; to all schoolmasters from Doctor Hawtreay down to Mr. Squeers. I conjure up before me an awful tribunal of youth and innocence, attended by its venerable instructors (like the ten thousand red-cheeked charity children in Saint Paul's), sitting in judgment, and Gorgius pleading his cause in the midst. Out of Court, out of Court, fat old Florizel! Beadles, turn out that bloated, pimple-faced man! If Gorgius *must* have a statue in the new Palace which the Brentford nation is building, it ought to be set up in the Flunkeys' Hall. He should be represented cutting out a coat, in which art he is said to have excelled. He also invented Maraschino punch, a shoe-buckle (this was in the vigour of his youth and the prime force of his invention), and a Chinese pavilion, the most hideous building in the world. He could drive a four-in-hand very nearly as well as the Brighton coachman, could fence elegantly, and, it is said, play the fiddle well. And he smiled with such irresistible fascination, that persons who were introduced into his august presence became his victims, body and soul, as a rabbit becomes the prey of a great big boa-constrictor.

"I would wager that if Mr. Widdicomb were, by a revolution, placed on the throne of Brentford, people would be equally fascinated by his irresistibly majestic smile, and tremble as they knelt down to kiss his hand. If he went to Dublin they would erect an obelisk on the spot where he first landed, as the Paddylanders did when Gorgius visited them. We have all of us read with delight that story of the King's voyage to Haggisland, where his presence inspired such a fury of loyalty; and where the most famous man of the country—the Baron of Bradwardine—coming on board the royal yacht, and finding a glass out of which Gorgius had drunk, put it into his coat pocket as an inestimable relic, and went ashore in his boat again. But the Baron sat down upon the glass and broke it, and cut his coat-tails very much; and the inestimable relic

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was lost to the world for ever. O noble Bradwardine! what old-world superstition could set you on your knees before such an idol as that?

“If you want to moralize upon the immutability of human affairs, go and see the figure of Gorgius in his real, identical robes, at the wax-works.—Admittance one shilling. Children and flunkeys sixpence. Go, and pay sixpence.”

Mr. Hutton's book on Scott shows traces of his having been to some degree infected by Thackeray's indignation; but his conclusion is much milder. He tells of Scott's pleasure at receiving the first baronetcy of George IV's creation, “directly derived from the source of honour,” as Scott wrote, “and neither begged nor bought, as is the usual fashion;” how, on the day Erskine, his most intimate friend, died, “Scott went on board the royal yacht, was most graciously received by George, had his health drunk by the King in a bottle of Highland whiskey, and with a proper show of devoted loyalty entreated to be allowed to retain the glass out of which his Majesty had just drunk his health,” and how the glass was satisfactorily sat upon and squelched; and how Scott affected George's politics, “and as he grew more conservative Scott grew more conservative likewise, till he came to think this particular King almost a pillar of the Constitution.” Upon all of which this is Mr. Hutton's judgment—

“The whole relation to George was a grotesque thread in Scott's life; and I cannot quite forgive him for the utterly conventional severity with which he threw over his first patron, the Queen, for sins which were certainly not grosser, if they were not much less gross, than those of his second patron, the husband who had set her the example which she faithfully, though at a distance, followed.”⁸

⁸ Mr. Hutton's closing reference to the Queen is only a softened rendering of an epigrammatic saying of her own at the time of her trial—

that she “never committed adultery but once, and that was with Mrs. Fitzherbert's husband.”

How an ordinary author would have acted, circumstanced as Scott was, is a thing into which it would scarcely be worth his readers' while to inquire. But Scott holds a very exceptional position as one whom his readers desire to regard as a good man as well as a gifted one, and to feel able to believe in. That his craving to become Scott of Abbotsford, a landed proprietor, and a sort of feudal chieftain, should lead him to palm off adulterated literary products upon a public which had been most generous with him—this might possibly be overlooked. His conviction that British royalty, even of the Hanover and Brunswick quality, was nobler than that of the Corsican upstart, might be set down to his surroundings and a perverted patriotism. But when we find him adoring the guinea's stamp and careless whether it covered gold or clay, when he exults in ingratiating himself with one of the most unspeakable blackguards that ever filled a throne instead of a prison, and glorifies this wretch as "every inch a King"—then it seems as if Thackeray dealt lightly in charging him merely with flunkeyism.⁹

⁹ In extenuation of Scott's raptures on the occasion of George IV's Edinburgh visit, it might be pleaded that no man should be tried by other standards than those of his own day and generation, and that he merely shared a universal enthusiasm. To this view may be opposed the impression which the transaction made upon another and a greater man then residing in Edinburgh. Carlyle, as he records in his posthumously published *Reminiscences* (of Edward Irving), had at this time invited two friends to make their home in his modest chambers, which they did at the time of the Royal visit,—“I myself *not there*. I had

grown disgusted with the fulsome 'loyalty' of all classes in Edinburgh towards the approaching George Fourth visit, whom, though called and reckoned a 'king,' I in my private radicalism of mind could consider only as a—what shall I call him? And loyalty was not the feeling I had towards any part of the phenomenon. At length reading one day in a public placard from the magistrates (of which there had been several) that on his Majesty's advent it was expected that everybody would be carefully well-dressed, 'black coat and white duck trousers,' if at all convenient, I grumbled to myself, 'Scan-

Southey.

Southey followed Scott in visiting Waterloo, and, of course, he improved the occasion by producing one of the ponderous things which he considered poems. His examination of the field was not made until Scott's *Field of Waterloo* was about issuing from the press, since it was on October 2 that he sent home an account of it. Two months later he was working at the resultant poem, for, on December 15, he wrote from Keswick to his friend C. W. W. Wynn, "The laureateship itself with me is no sinecure. I am at work in consequence of it at this time. Do not suppose that I mean to rival Walter Scott. My poem will be in a very different strain." To Scott himself Southey wrote (March 17, 1816), "How I should have rejoiced if we had met at Waterloo! This feeling I had and expressed upon the ground. You have pictured it with your characteristic force and animation. My poem will reach you in a few weeks: it is so different in its kind that, however kindly malice may be disposed, it will not be possible to institute a comparison with yours. I take a different point of time and a wider range, leaving the battle untouched, and describing the field only such as it was when I surveyed it." In April or May, 1816, appeared this lucubration, entitled *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo*. It was furnished with a "proem," and divided into two "parts," of which the first "describes a journey to the scene of war," while "the second is in an allegorical form," and "exposes the gross material philosophy which has been the guiding principle of the French politicians from Mirabeau to Bonaparte;" and the "proem" and "parts" jointly contain 363 stanzas of

dalous flunkeys! I, if I were changing my dress at all, should incline rather to be in white coat and black trousers; but resolved rather to quit

the city altogether, and be absent and silent in such efflorescence of the flunkeyisms, which I was."

2,178 lines, not one of which on its own account merits transcription. One stanza, however, so fully embodies the Jack-Horner-like sentiment then prevalent in England as to require quotation for a special purpose:—

Southey.

“——On Waterloo

The tyrant's fortune in the scale was weigh'd—
His fortune and the World's,—and England threw
Her sword into the balance—down it sway'd :
And when in battle first he met that foe
There he received his mortal overthrow.”

This stanza owes its exceptional interest to a passage in Archbishop Whately's *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*. The learned author quotes thus from Hume's *Essay on Miracles*:—“The wise lend a very academic faith to every report which favours the passion of the reporter, whether it magnifies his *country*, his family, or himself.” This argument is carried on by Dr. Whately in the following terms:—

“Buonaparte prevailed over all the hostile States in turn, *except England*; in the zenith of his power his fleets were swept from the sea, *by England*; his troops always defeat an equal, and frequently even a superior number of those of any other nation, *except the English*; and with them it is just the reverse; twice, and twice only, he is personally engaged against an *English commander*, and both times he is totally defeated—at Acre, and at Waterloo; and to crown all, *England* finally crushes this tremendous power, which has so long kept the Continent in subjection or in alarm; and to the *English* he surrenders himself prisoner! Thoroughly national, to be sure! It *may* be all very true; but I will only ask, *if* a story *had* been fabricated for the express purpose of amusing the English nation, could it have been contrived more ingeniously?”

Thackeray has a special tribute to Southey, which may be severed for the moment from the remainder of

Southey.

The Chronicle of the Drum, because of its applicability here—

“ Take Doctor Southey from the shelf,
 An LL.D., a peaceful man ;
 Good Lord, how doth he plume himself
 Because we beat the Corsican ! ”

Contem-
 poraneous
 poems.

Altogether, Jeffrey gave a not unfair summary of contemporaneous Waterloo poems when, in his review of the third canto of *Childe Harold*, he wrote thus :—

“ There can be no more remarkable proof of the greatness of Lord Byron’s genius than the spirit and interest he has contrived to communicate to his picture of the often-drawn and difficult scene of the breaking up from Brussels before the great battle. It is a trite remark, that poets generally fail in the representation of great events where the interest is recent, and the particulars are consequently clearly and commonly known : and the reason is obvious : For as it is the object of poetry to make us feel for distant or imaginary occurrences nearly as strongly as if they were present and real, it is plain that there is no scope for her enchainments, where the impressive reality, with all its vast preponderance of interest, is already before us, and where the concern we take in the Gazette far outgoes any emotion that can be conjured up in us by the help of fine descriptions. It is natural, however, for the sensitive tribe of poets to mistake the common interest which they then share with the unpoetical part of their countrymen, for a vocation to versify ; and so they proceed to pour out the lukewarm distillations of their phantasies upon the unchecked effervescence of public feeling ! All our bards, accordingly, great and small, and of all sexes, ages, and conditions, from Scott and Southey down to the hundreds without names or additions, have adventured upon this theme—and failed in the management of it ! And while they yielded to the patriotic impulse, as if they had all caught the inspiring summons—

Let those rhyme now who never rhym’d before
 And those who always rhyme, now rhyme the more,—

the result has been, that scarcely a line to be remembered has been produced on a subject which probably was thought, of itself, a secure passport to immortality. It required some courage to venture on a theme beset with so many dangers, and deformed with the wrecks of so many former adventurers ; —and a theme, too, which, in its general conception, appeared alien to the general tone of Lord Byron's poetry."

Contem-
poraneous
poems.

Jeffrey's wholesale censure of the bards who did those things which they ought not to have done might fitly have been supplemented by an approving word for those who left them undone. In that case, he must have had commendation for his former antagonist, Tom Moore, who was conspicuous by his absence from the Waterloo choir, in defiance of importunities to lend it his voice. Two of Moore's most constant literary advisers were Lady Donegal and her sister, Mary Godfrey. The latter wrote to him, soon after the publication of *The Field of Waterloo* (November 6, 1815), "Walter Scott's *Waterloo* is not the Duke of Wellington's Waterloo. It is by all accounts a very poor performance. I have not seen it yet, nor am I very impatient about it, as I have read the Gazette of that grand battle, in which it is better described, and just as poetically, as I am told. Money, however, is his object ; and besides what he makes by this poem, he is to publish his *Travels to the Netherlands* [that is, *Paul's Letters*], the price agreed on, before he set out, 500*l.*" Moore said, in his answer (Dec. 6, 1815), "I have read *Walter-loo* since I heard from you. The battle murdered many, and *he* has murdered the battle: 'tis sad stuff—Hougomont rhyming to 'long,' 'strong,' etc. He must have learned his pronunciation of French from Solomon Grundy in the play —' *Commong dong*, as they say in Dunkirk.'" Lady Donegal next took up the subject, writing, "You really would confer a lasting obligation on me, and as lasting

Contem-
poraneous
poems.

honour on yourself, if you would comply with my request, which is that you will sit down and write, without further loss of time, the *Battle of Waterloo*. Do not let that pitiful, wretched performance of Scott's remain the only tribute that genius has paid to such glorious deeds. . . . I am sure you would make it the most beautiful thing in the language, and it would cost you but very little time or trouble. . . . Let the Irish bard record the deeds of the Irish hero." Miss Godfrey again followed up her sister's appeal, saying, "Bab [Lady Donegal], who is the most heroic and loyal of women, wants you to celebrate Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington, ditto of York, etc., etc. As to Walter Scott, he ought to be shot upon the field of battle as a peace offering to the manes of the illustrious dead whose deeds he has so ill recorded. Charity, that covers a multitude of sins, and does many other kind and good acts, certainly does not produce good poems. *Waterloo* was written for the benefit of the subscription for the soldiers, as *Don Roderick* was for the Portuguese; they are both the worst things he has written, and not half so much to the purpose as a charity sermon." But Moore—whether because his view of his own *métier* differed from his correspondents', or because his head and hands were filled by *Lalla Rookh*, which he was then writing—turned a deaf ear to these blandishments, and confined his poetizings on French topics to his record of the sentiments of the *Fudge Family*. In consideration of the frightful examples instanced by Jeffrey, it may be that this was one of the cases in which silence was golden.

Words-
worth.

Not to be comprehended among the abortive rhymings of the day was one of Wordsworth's fine sonnets,

of which the last six lines were “intended for an inscription”:—

Words-
worth.

“OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

February, 1816.

“Intrepid sons of Albion ! not by you
Is life despised ; ah no, the spacious earth
Ne’er saw a race who held, by right of birth,
So many objects to which love is due :
Ye slight not life—to God and nature true ;
But death, becoming death, is dearer far,
When duty bids you bleed in open war !
Hence hath your prowess quelled that impious crew.
Heroes ! for instant sacrifice prepared,
Yet filled with ardour, and on triumph bent
’Mid direst shocks of mortal accident,
To you who fell, and you whom slaughter spared,
To guard the fallen, and consummate the event,
Your Country rears this sacred Monument !”

Long enough after the battle for the first enthusiasm to have passed away—in 1820—the subject given at Cambridge for the competition for the Chancellor’s Gold Medal was *Waterloo*. Among the competitors was Macaulay—who had won the prize for 1819 by his poem on *Pompeii*, as he did that for 1821 by his poem on *Evening*,—but his effort on this occasion was unsuccessful.¹⁰ The prize for 1820 was awarded to George Ewing Scott, of Trinity Hall. Several passages detail incidents in the battle so accurately that the temptation has been strong to quote them in conjunction with the narrative ; but the poem would have suffered by mutilation, and it is here given in full :—

Cambridge
prize poem.

G. E. Scott.

¹⁰ The opening lines of Macaulay’s *Waterloo* poem have been quoted in note 139, page 223.

“ WATERLOO.

G. E. Scott.

“ From stormy skies the sun withdrew his light ;
Terrific in her grandeur reigned the Night ;
’Twas deepest gloom—or lightning’s angry glare ;
Voices of mighty thunder rent the air ;
In gusts and moanings hollow raved the blast,
And clouds poured out their fury, as they passed.
But fiercer storms to-morrow’s sun shall fright ;
More deadly thunders usher in the night.
The winds may howl unnoticed ; for their sound
’Mid the deep groans of thousands shall be drowned ;
The plain be deluged with a ghastlier flood ;
That tempest’s wrath shall fall in showers of blood.

“ See ! by the flash of momentary day,
The hills are thronged with battle’s dread array.
There, Gallia’s legions, reeking with the gore
Of slaughtered Prussia ; thirsting deep for more ;
Secure of Conquest ; ravening for their prey ;
On Brussels thought, and cursed the night’s delay.
Here Brunswick’s sable warriors, grim and still,
Mourned their lost chief ; and eyed the adverse hill
With fell intent. Indignant at retreat,
Here Britons burned once more that foe to greet.
Yet were there some could slumber, and forget,
Awhile, the deadly work for which they met.
But anxious thoughts broke many a soldier’s rest,
Thoughts not unworthy of a Hero’s breast.
The rugged Veteran, struggling with a sigh,
In fancy listened to his orphan’s cry ;
Saw them a prey to poverty and woe,
And felt that pang which only parents know.
With eager feelings, not unmixed with awe,
A battle’s eve now first the stripling saw :
Weary, and wet, and famished, as he lay,
Imagination, wandering far away,
Shows him the scene of dear, domestic joy ;
Laughs with him o’er the frolics of the boy.

The words of parting tingle in his ears ;
 How swells his heart, as each loved form appears !
 And now it yearns towards her, and her alone,
 Whom youth's fond dreams had giv'n him for his own.
 From these—from her—'twas agony to part !
 To-morrow's chance smote chill upon his heart.
 'Twas but a moment. Hope asserts her right,
 Grants him his wildest visions of delight.
 To gay, victorious thoughts, he lightly yields,
 And sleeps like Condé ere his first of fields.¹¹

“Slow broke the sun thro' that sad morning's gloom,
 And awful scenes, his watery beams illume.
 No glittering pageant met the dazzled eyes ;
 For painful marches and tempestuous skies
 Had quenched the light of steel—the pride of gold ;
 Each warrior's plight a tale of hardship told.
 And youthful eyes beamed gaiety no more,
 But all a look of settled fierceness wore.

“It is a breathless pause—while armies wait
 The madd'ning signal for the work of fate.
 Its thunder spoke,—quick answering to the first,
 Peal upon peal in dread succession burst.
 Darted Imperial Eagles from their stand ;
 Rushed in their train a long-victorious band ;
 Shot down the slope, and dashed upon the wood,
 Where, calm and ready, Britain's guardians stood.

“Hark to that yell ! as hand to hand they close,
 There the last shriek of multitudes arose !
 —Hark to the musket-fire ! from man to man,
 Rapid, and gathering fury as it ran,
 It spreads, fierce crackling, thro' the ranks of death,
 While nations sink before its blasting breath.
 The war-smoke mounts ; cloud rolling after cloud :
 They spread ; they mingle ; till one sulph'rous shroud
 Enwraps the field. What shouts, what demon-screams
 Rung from that misty vale ! What fiery gleams

¹¹ “The battle of Rocroi, on the eve of which, according to Voltaire (*Siècle de Louis XIV*), the Prince, having made all his dispositions, slept so soundly that they were obliged to awaken him for the engagement.”—*Note by the Poet.*

G. E. Scott.

Broke fast and far—oh ! words are weak to tell.
It was a scene had less of earth than hell.

“ But look ! what means yon fitful, redd’ning glare ?
What flames are struggling with the murky air ?
Lo ! thro’ the gloom they burst ! and full and bright
Streams o’er the war their fearful, wavering light.
Amidst yon wood ’tis raging. Yes ! thy towers,
Ill-fated Hougomont, that blaze devours.
Forth blindly rushing mingle friend and foe.
See the walls tottering !—there ! down, down they go
Headlong ! Within that ruin to have been !
Oh ! shuddering fancy quails beneath the scene.
For there had many a victim crept to die ;
There, crushed and motionless, in heaps they lie.
And happy they : for many a wretch was there,
Powerful to suffer ; lingering in despair.

“ Is it the bursting earthquake’s voice of fear ?
That hollow rush ? No ! borne in full career
On roll the chosen squadrons of the foe,
Whose mail-clad bosoms mock the sabre’s blow,
Wild waves of sable plumage o’er them dancing ;
Above that sea, quick, broken flashes glancing
From brandished steel ; shrill raising, as they came,
The spell of that all-conquering chieftain’s name.
Dismal the rattle of their harness grew ;
Their grisly features opened on the view.

“ Forth spurring, cheerful as their trumpets rang,
The stately chivalry of England sprang,
In native valour—arms of proof—arrayed :
Nought but his own right hand, and his good blade,
To guard each hero’s breast. Like thunder-clouds
Rolling together, clash the foaming crowds.
Their swords are falling with gigantic sway,
And gashes yawn, and limbs are lopped away ;
And lightened chargers toss the loosening rein,
Break frantic forth, and scour along the plain.
Their lords, the glorious shapes of war they bore,
The terrible, the graceful—are no more ;
Crushed out of man’s similitude, expire,
With nought to mark them from the gory mire,

(Tomb of their yet warm relics) save the last
Convulsive flutter, as the spirit passed.
Those iron squadrons reel ! their Eagle's won,
Tho' squadrons bled to rescue it ! 'tis done,—
That stern, unequal combat ! 'tis a chase !
Hot Wrath let loose on Terror and Disgrace !
Such is the desert antelope's career ;
Plunging, and tossing, mad with pain and fear ;
Whom her keen foe, the murd'rous vulture, rides
With talons rooted in her streaming sides.
Where, yonder, war's tumultuous billows roll ;
Where each wild passion fires the frenzied soul ;
The blood, the havoc, of that ruthless hour
On those steeled hearts have lost their chilling power.
The charging veteran marks, with careless eye,
His comrade sink ; and, as he rushes by,
Sees not the varied horrors of his lot ;
Springs on his foe, and strikes, and shudders not.

“ But turn, and pity that brave, suffering band,
Beneath the battery's fury doomed to stand
With useless arms : with leisure to survey
The wreck around them. Hearts of proof were they
That shrunk not. Burning like a meteor star,
With whirlwind's fury rushing from afar,
The bolt of death amidst their close array
With deafening crash falls ; bursts ; and marks its way
With torn and scattered victims. There are they
Who, but one moment since, with haughty brow,
Stood firm in conscious manliness. And now—
Mark those pale, altered features ; those wild groans ;
Those quiv'ring lips ; those blood-stained, shattered bones !
With burning hearts, and half-averted eyes,
Their fellows view that hideous sacrifice.
Oh ! they did hail the summons with delight,
That called them forth to mingle in the fight.
Forward they press : too busy now to heed
The piteous cry ; the wail of those who plead
With frantic earnestness to friend and chief
For help to bear them off ; for that relief

G. E. Scott.

Which might not be. How sunk the sufferer's heart,
 Who saw his hopes expire—his friends depart,
 And leave him to his woes—a helpless prey.
 Death ! death alone may be his friend to-day.
 'Tis he shall calm each agonising fear
 Of trampling hoofs, or lancer's coward spear ;¹²
 Shall cool that thirst, and bid those torments cease,
 And o'er him shed the sweets of sleep and peace.

“ When storms are loud, go, view some rugged shore,
 Tow'rd whose stern barrier hoarsely racing pour
 The long dark billows ; swelling till they curl ;
 Then full against the rocks their fury hurl,
 And spring aloft in clouds. Dost see that wave
 Leap at the cliffs, and into yonder cave
 Ride, swift and high ? From the rude sides recoiling,
 It flies in showers of spray ; then, fiercely boiling,
 Rallies, and drives its might amongst the crags,
 Wheeling in eddies—vain ! its fury flags ;
 Tost from their points, it yields ; and to the deep,
 Baffled and broken, as its currents sweep,
 Leaves to its conqu'rors, on the cavern floor,
 The wreaths of foam ; the crest it proudly wore.
 Firm as the rocks that strew that sea-beat coast,
 In clust'ring masses stood the British host.
 Fierce as those waves, the warrior horse of Gaul
 Streamed, blindly rushing to as sure a fall.
 Ever, as near to each dark square they drew,
 In act to plunge, and crush th' unshrinking few,
 Burst, as from Death's own jaws, a fiery shower,
 Whose 'whelming blast, whose paralysing power,
 Nought earthly might withstand. To rise no more,
 Whole ranks are down. The treach'rous cuirass tore
 The breast beneath ; in splinters flew the lance.
 Yet nobly true to Glory and to France—
 Yet, 'mid the ruin, many a steadfast heart,
 E'en to the last, played well a chieftain's part.

¹² “ This epithet can, of course, only refer to the use made of the weapon by the French against the wounded and helpless.”—*Note by the Poet.*

They lived to see their efforts fail to cheer
 Those veterans, pale with all unwonted fear.
 In vain devotion, in despairing pride,
 They rushed upon the bristling steel and died.
 What tho' the remnant fled? Fresh myriads rear
 The forked banner, couch the threatening spear;
 Drive, and are driven, to that fatal goal;
 Countless as clouds before the gale that roll;
 Fast, as the troubled world of waters pours
 Wave upon wave, from undiminished stores.

“The tide has turned: the roar is dying fast.
 Each lessening wave breaks shorter than the last;
 And France, the life-blood ebbing from her veins,
 Feebly, yet furious still, for victory strains.
 One effort more! a mighty one! She came,
 Nerved by despair, and goaded on by shame.
 But Britain marked her fainting rival's plight,
 And gave her vengeance way; and from her height
 Plunged, like the lava cataract, whose roar
 Shakes frozen Hecla's precipices hoar.
 The bright blue gems of Arctic ice that crowned
 Her lofty head, are melting all around;
 A thousand winters' hardened depth of snow
 Is vanishing before that torrent's glow;
 Mighty the rocks that, frowning, bar its path:
 Rending, uprooting, scattering them in wrath;
 The flaming deluge, with resistless sway,
 Holds on its widely desolating way.

“France! thou art fallen! and he, so oft the boast,
 The idol, of thine oft-deserted host,
 Leaves it once more—to curse his name and die.
 But as he turned, what phantoms met his eye?
 Rising like those wild shapes that from the dead
 Return to haunt the tortured murderer's bed.
 No, mighty murderer! 'tis not a dream!
 'Tis Prussia's self! her own exulting scream!
 Fliest thou? she comes, with lavish hands to pay
 The debt that swelled thro' many a bitter day.

G. E. Scott.

There's rust upon her steel. Aye! there was shed
The deadliest venom hatred ever bred.
And she shall wash that deeply cankering stain,
France, in thy blood and tears: but wash in vain.
Not all the flames she kindles in thy land
Shall ever brighten that polluted brand.

'Tis retribution, bloody as thy deeds:
But who shall pity when a tiger bleeds?

"Then cry for mercy! was it not denied
To every suppliant in thine hour of pride?
Grim laughs th' avenger hanging on thy way,
Weary with slaughter, lab'ring still to slay:
And unfleshed Belgians hurry down to glean
The field where Britain's generous hand had been.

"To distant skies that hurricane has rolled—
But oh! the wreck is left! Could tongue unfold
The matchless horrors of those cumbered plains,
'Twould chill the current in a warrior's veins.
And yet, that field of anguish, brief as keen,
Was but the centre of the one wide scene
Of human misery! Oh! who shall say
How many wounded spirits, far away,
Are left to groan thro' long, chill, bitter years,
Beneath the woe that nothing earthly cheers?
Shall Glory be the widowed bride's relief?
She feels it but a mockery of grief.
Shall Glory dry the childless mother's tears?
Harsh grate the notes of Fame upon her ears!
Thine are no Spartan matrons, favoured isle!
Gentle as fair! The sunshine of their smile,
Where the proud victor loves to bask, is set,
With Sorrow's dew the loveliest cheeks are wet.
Throughout the land is gone a mourning voice;
And broken are the hearts that should rejoice.
Dimly, as yet, the Crown of Victory shines;
Where cypress with the blood-stained laurel twines.
But there shall Time the brightest verdure breathe,
And pluck the gloomy foliage from her wreath.

Then proudly shall posterity retrace,
 First in the deathless honours of their race,
 That giant fight, which crushed Napoleon's power,
 And saved the world. Far distant is the hour
 Unheard of, yet, the deed our sons must do,
 That shall eclipse thy glory, WATERLOO!"

G. E. Scott.

To a fertile fancy a battlefield like that of Waterloo, seen by night, is pretty certain to impart ghostly suggestions. Victor Hugo indulges in prose poetry of this kind in *Les Misérables*:—

Spectral
poems.Victor
Hugo.

"The field of Waterloo has at the present day that calmness which belongs to the earth, and resembles all plains, but at night a sort of visionary mist rises from it, and if any traveller will walk about it, and listen and dream, like Virgil on the mournful plains of Philippi, the hallucination of the catastrophe seizes upon him. The frightful June 18th lives again, the false monumental hill is levelled, the wondrous lion is dissipated, the battlefield resumes its reality, lines of infantry undulate on the plain, furious galloping crosses the horizon; the startled dreamer sees the flash of sabres, the sparkle of bayonets, the red light of shells, the monstrous collision of thunderbolts; he hears, like a death-groan from the tomb, the vague clamour of the phantom battle. These shadows are grenadiers; these flashes are cuirassiers; this skeleton is Napoleon; this skeleton is Wellington; all this is non-existent, and yet still combats, and the ravines are stained purple, and the trees rustle, and there is fury in even the clouds and in the darkness, while all the stern heights, Mont St. Jean, Hougomont, Frischermont, Papelotte, and Planchenoit, seem confusedly crowned by hosts of spectres exterminating one another."

Scott probably was the first to work in this fruitful mine, exhuming his *Dance of Death*, already mentioned. In it he worked over again the demon-dance which he had employed in *Marmion* to prelude the horrors of

Sir W
Scott.

Spectral
poems.
—
Scott.

the Battle of Flodden ; and he makes his phantoms on the plain of Waterloo “wheel their wild dance” during the night before the action,

“And still their ghastly roundelay
Was of the coming battle-fray,
And of the destined dead.”

Zedlitz.

The Austrian Baron von Zedlitz—himself a foeman of the French, who had fought at Regensburg, Aspern, and Wagram, a man of letters and dramatist, and translator of *Childe Harold* into German—was similarly inspired to write *Die Nächtliche Heerschau*, which was set to music by the Chevalier Neukomm and Englished in several versions. That which follows is the anonymous one used by Longfellow in his *Poets and Poetry of Europe*:—

“THE MIDNIGHT REVIEW.

“At midnight from his grave
The drummer woke and rose,
And beating loud the drum,
Forth on his errand goes.

“Stirred by his fleshless arms,
The drumsticks rise and fall ;
He beats the loud retreat,
Reveill  , and roll-call.

“So strangely rolls that drum,
So deep it echoes round,
Old soldiers in their graves
To life start at the sound—

“Both they in farthest North,
Stiff in the ice that lay,
And they who warm repose
Beneath Italian clay.

“ Below the mud of Nile,
And 'neath the Arabian sand,
Their burial-place they quit,
And soon to arms they stand.

“ And at midnight from his grave
The trumpeter arose,
And, mounted on his horse,
A loud, shrill blast he blows.

“ On airy coursers then
The cavalry are seen,
Old squadrons, erst renowned,
Gory and gashed, I ween.

“ Beneath the casque their skulls
Smile grim, and proud their air,
As in their bony hands
Their long, sharp swords they bare.

“ And at midnight from his tomb
The chief awoke and rose,
And, followed by his staff,
With slow steps on he goes.

“ A little hat he wears,
A coat quite plain has he,
A little sword for arms
At his left side hangs free.¹³

“ O'er the vast plain the moon
A paly lustre threw :
The man with the little hat
The troops goes to review.

¹³ This stanza may specially illustrate that process of 'improving' simply written verse into heroics, which has already been instanced in

the case of Queen Hortense's *chanson*. The original and its improvement by one of the translators are as follows :—

“ Er trägt ein kleines Hütchen,
Er trägt ein einfach Kleid,
Und einen kleinen Degen
Trägt er an seiner Seit'.

“ No plume his helm adorneth,
His garb no regal pride,
And small is the polished sabre
That's girded to his side.”

Spectral
poems.

Zedlitz.

“The ranks present their arms,
Deep rolls the drum the while;
Recovering then, the troops
Before the chief defile.

“Captains and generals round
In circles formed appear;
The chief to the first a word
Now whispers in his ear.

“The word goes round the ranks,
Resounds along the line;
That word they give is *France!*
The answer—*Sainte-Hélène!*

“’Tis there, at midnight hour,
The grand review, they say,
Is by dead Cæsar held
In the *Champs-Élysées*.”

Heine.

Heine employs these ghostly warriors in his *Pictures of Travel*, in prose;¹⁴ and in his *Book of Songs* is a poem which holds an intermediate place between the possible and the supernatural, of which there is only the promise. The translation which follows is by Edgar Alfred Bowring:—

“THE GRENADIERS.

“Two grenadiers travell’d tow’rds France one day,
On leaving their prison in Russia,
And sadly they hung their heads in dismay,
When they reached the frontiers of Prussia.

“For then they first heard the story of woe,
That France had utterly perish’d;
The Grand Army had met with an overthrow,
They had captured their Emperor cherish’d.

¹⁴ An extract of this kind from that work will be found in note 19, page 475.

“ Then both of the grenadiers wept full sore
At hearing the terrible story ;
And one of them said, ‘ Alas ! once more
My wounds are bleeding and gory.’

“ The other one said, ‘ The game’s at an end,
With thee I would die right gladly,
But I’ve wife and child, whom at home I should tend,
For without me they’ll fare but badly.’

“ ‘ What matters my child, what matters my wife ?
A heavier case has arisen ;
Let them beg, if they’re hungry, all their life—
My Emperor sighs in a prison !

“ ‘ Dear brother, pray grant me this last prayer ;
If my hours I now must number,
O take my corpse to my country fair,
That there it may peacefully slumber.

“ ‘ The Legion of Honour, with ribbon red,
Upon my bosom place thou,
And put in my hand my musket dread,
And my sword around me brace thou.

“ ‘ And so in my grave will I silently lie,
And watch like a guard o’er the forces,
Until the roaring of cannon hear I,
And the trampling of neighing horses.

“ ‘ My Emperor then will ride over my grave,
While the swords glitter brightly and rattle ;
Then armed to the teeth will I rise from the grave,
For my Emperor hasting to battle.’ ”

At last Thomas Hood, tired very likely of Waterloo Hood.
poems, undertook to laugh down the spectral variety at
least, and produced what he called “ a new version ” :—

Spectral
Poems.

Hood.

“NAPOLEON’S MIDNIGHT REVIEW.

“In his bed, bolt upright,
In the dead of the night,
The French Emperor starts like a ghost !
By a dream held in charm,
He uplifts his right arm,
For he dreams of reviewing his host.

“To the stable he glides,
For the charger he rides ;
And he mounts him, still under the spell ;
Then with echoing tramp,
They proceed through the camp,
All intent on a task he loves well.

“Such a sight soon alarms,
And the guards present arms
As he glides to the posts that they keep ;
Then he gives the brief word,
And the bugle is heard,
Like a hound giving tongue in its sleep.

“Next the drums they arouse,
But with dull row-de-dows,
And they give but a somnolent sound,
While the foot and horse, both,
Very slowly and loth,
Begin drowsily mustering round.

“To the right and left hand
They fall in, by command,
In a line that might be better dressed ;
While the steeds blink and nod,
And the lancers think odd
To be roused like the spears from their rest

“With their mouth of wide shape,
Mortars seem all agape,

Heavy guns look more heavy with sleep ;
 And, whatever their bore,
 Seem to think it one more
 In a night such a field-day to keep.

Spectral
 Poems.

 Hood.

“Then the arms christened small
 Fire no volley at all,
 But go off, like the rest, in a doze ;
 And the eagles, poor things,
 Tuck their heads 'neath their wings,
 And the band ends in tunes through the nose.

“Till each pupil of Mars
 Takes a wink like the stars,—
 Open order no eye can obey :
 If the plumes in their heads
 Were the feathers of beds,
 Never top could be sounder than they.

“So, just wishing good-night,
 Bows Napoleon polite ;
 But instead of a loyal endeavour
 To reply with a cheer,
 Not a sound met his ear,
 Though each face seemed to say ‘*Nap* for ever!’”

The introduction of French Waterloo poems would swell these pages beyond all reasonable limits ; but room may be made for an extract from Casimir-Delavigne's *Battle of Waterloo*. The poem as a whole, besides being long, is so largely devoted to the French political dissensions of its own day that it has not great present interest. But the passage devoted to the Guard is a fine tribute to the acts of devotion which have already been described in the prose of the author's fellow-Academicians, Thiers and Hugo. The translation is anonymous, having appeared originally in *The London Magazine* :—

Delavigne.

Delavigne.

“ But no,—what son of France has spared his tears
 For her defenders, dying in their fame?
 Though kings return, desired through lengthening years,
 What old man’s cheek is tinged not with her shame?
 What veteran, who their fortune’s treason hears,
 Feels not the quickening spark of his old youthful flame?

“ Good Heaven! what lessons mark that one day’s page,
 What ghastly figures that might crowd an age!
 How shall the historic Muse record the day,
 Nor, starting, cast the trembling pen away?
 Hide from me, hide, those soldiers overborne,
 Broken with toil, with death-bolts crushed and torn,—
 Those quivering limbs with dust defiled,
 And bloody corpses upon corpses piled.

Veil from mine eyes that monument
 Of nation against nation spent
 In struggling rage that pants for breath;
 Spare us the bands thou sparedst, Death!
 O VARUS! where the warriors thou hast led?
 RESTORE OUR LEGIONS! give us back the dead!

“ I saw the broken squadrons reel,
 The steeds plunge wild with spurning heel,
 Our eagles trod in miry gore,
 The leopard standards swooping o’er;
 The wounded on their slow cars dying,
 The rout disordered, wavering, flying;
 Tortured with struggles vain, the throng
 Sway, shock, and drag their shattered mass along,
 And leave behind their long array
 Wrecks, corpses, blood,—the footmarks of their way.

“ Through whirlwind smoke and flashing flame,—
 O grief!—what sight appals mine eye?
 The sacred band, with generous shame,
 Sole ’gainst an army, pause—to die
 Struck with the rare devotion, ’tis in vain,
 The foes at gaze their blades restrain;
 And, proud to conquer, hem them round: the cry
 Returns, ‘ The Guard surrender not!—they die!

" 'Tis said, that, when in dust they saw them lie,
A reverend sorrow for their brave career
Smote on the foe: they fixed the pensive eye,
And first beheld them undisturbed with fear.

" See, then, these heroes, long invincible,
Whose threatening features still their conquerors brave;
Frozen in death those eyes are terrible;
Feats of the past their deep-scarred brows engrave:
For these are they who bore Italia's sun,
Who o'er Castilia's mountain-barrier passed.
The North beheld them o'er the rampart run
Which frost of ages round her Russia cast.
All sank subdued before them, and the date
Of combats owed this guerdon to their glory,
Seldom to Franks denied—to fall elate
On some proud day that should survive in story."

Lord Byron's bitter tirade against the Duke of Wellington, at the opening of Canto IX of *Don Juan*, ought to be separated as far as possible from the better known passage in *Childe Harold*, where the poet contents himself with simply ignoring the hero of Waterloo. Byron's real opinion of Wellington—for his real opinions on all subjects were systematically perverted when, in certain of his moods, he wrote for the public eye—is more nearly conveyed in a letter of his to Tom Moore *à propos* of the Battle of Waterloo (July 7, 1815):—

" Every hope of a republic is over, and we must go on under the old system. But I am sick at heart of politics and slaughters, and the luck which Providence is pleased to lavish on Lord Castlereagh is only a proof of the little value the gods set upon prosperity, when they permit such —s as he and that drunken corporal, old Blücher, to bully their betters. From this, however, Wellington should be excepted. He is a man, and the Scipio of our Hannibal. However, he may thank the Russian frosts, which destroyed the REAL *élite* of the French army, for the success of Waterloo."

Byron.

Of Blücher he wrote, later—

“I remember seeing Blücher in the London assemblies, and never saw anything of his age less venerable. With the voice and manners of a recruiting sergeant, he pretended to the honours of a hero,—just as if a stone could be worshipped because a man had stumbled over it.”

While in such a humour about Napoleon's downfall and those who had had a hand in it, Byron was very capable of venting his spleen in vitriolic phrases against the chief agent in the catastrophe. But there must further be borne in mind the special conditions under which *Don Juan* was evolved. Byron was at odds with the entire representative British public, and took a kind of impish delight in saying whatever could most thoroughly exasperate it. Of his own temper at the time of publishing the earlier cantos he wrote to Murray (Bologna, August 24, 1819):—

“I wish that I had been in better spirits ; but I am out of sorts, out of nerves, and now and then (I begin to fear) out of my senses. All this Italy has done for me, and not England : I defy you all, and your climate to boot, to make me mad. But if really I do ever become a bedlamite, and wear a strait-waistcoat, let me be brought back among you ; your people will then be proper company.”

Constitutionally prone to attitudinize in ostentation of the worst moods his introspective imagination could depict—like a spoiled child that courts censure rather than pass unnoticed,—Byron devised a poem expressly calculated to scandalize British proprieties. *Don Juan* was an audacious defiance of his countrymen's sensibilities, poetical, political, social, and moral ; and, to irritate them to the utmost, he struck at one of their most vulnerable points—the hero of the nation, the Duke of Wellington, whom popular and poetical adulation had

set up as a sort of demigod. In presenting himself as the Vandal iconoclast of the British idol, Byron was actuated, unconsciously perhaps, by another kind of impulse which also originated in egotism and vanity. To men of a certain kind of inharmoniously developed genius—to Byron, to Heine, to Victor Hugo, for example; to all that class of fertile minds which form no settled political or social system, but generate a redundancy of undefined theories and yearnings, and very well defined prejudices and hatreds—it was gall and wormwood that the congenially brilliant, perhaps tawdry, achievements of Napoleon should be crushed down by the plain, shrewd, sound sense, uncoupled with originative inspiration but backed by tireless patience and dogged resolution, of which Wellington was the embodiment.¹⁵ It was under such inspiration

¹⁵ Victor Hugo himself draws the contrast in *Les Misérables*. "Waterloo," he says, "is the strangest encounter recorded in history; Napoleon and Wellington are not enemies, but contraries. Never did God, who delights in antitheses, produce a more striking contrast or a more extraordinary confrontation. On one side precision, foresight, geometry, prudence, a retreat assured, reserves prepared, an obstinate coolness, an imperturbable method, strategy profiting by the ground, tactics balancing battalions, carnage measured by a plumb-line, war regulated watch in hand, nothing left voluntarily to accident, old classic courage and absolute correctness. On the other side we have intuition, divination, military strangeness, superhuman instinct, a flashing glance; something that gazes like the eagle and strikes like lightning, all the mysteries of a profound mind,

association with destiny; the river, the plain, the forest, and the hill summoned, and to some extent compelled, to obey, the despot going so far as even to tyrannize over the battlefield, faith in a star blended with strategic science, heightening, but troubling it. Wellington was the Barrême of war, Napoleon was its Michael Angelo, and this true genius was conquered by calculation. On both sides somebody was expected; and it was the exact calculator who succeeded. Napoleon waited for Grouchy, who did not come; Wellington waited for Blücher, and he came. . . . It was a triumph of mediocrity, sweet to majorities; and destiny consented to this irony. . . . Waterloo is a battle of the first class, gained by a captain of the second." = Heine, the most immoderate of Napoleon-worshippers, went to a far greater extreme. In his *English Fragments*, he says

Byron.

that Byron, years after the battle of Waterloo, penned his apostrophe to its victor:—

in the chapter entitled *Wellington*, "We see in him only the victory of stupidity over genius—Arthur Wellington triumphant where Napoleon Bonaparte is overwhelmed! Never was a man more ironically gifted by Fortune, and it seems to us as though she would exhibit his empty littleness by raising him high on the shield of Victory. Fortune is a woman, and perhaps, in womanly wise, she cherishes a secret grudge against the man who overthrew her former darling, though the very overthrow came from her own will. . . . What vexes me most is the reflection that Wellington will be as immortal as Napoleon Bonaparte. . . . Wellington and Napoleon! It is a wonderful phenomenon that the human mind can at the same time think of both these names. There can be no greater contrast than the two, even in their external appearance. Wellington, the dumb ghost, with an ashy grey soul in a buckram body, a wooden smile in his freezing face—and by the side of *that* think of the figure of Napoleon, every inch a god!"=Beside the rhapsody of Victor Hugo, the typical Frenchman, may be set the comparison as instituted by an Englishman long after the prejudices and flatteries of the day had given place to sober reason. It is from the chapter of Mr. Justin McCarthy's *History of Our Own Time* which records the death of the Duke of Wellington:—"His success was due in great measure to a sort of inspired common sense which rose to something like genius. He had in the highest conceivable degree the art of winning victories.

In war, as in statesmanship, he had one characteristic which is said to have been the special gift of Julius Cæsar, and for the lack of which Cæsar's greatest modern rival in the art of conquest, the first Napoleon, lost all or nearly all that he had won. Wellington not only understood what could be done, but also what could not be done. The wild schemes of almost universal rule which set Napoleon astray and led him to his destruction, would have appeared to the strong common sense of the Duke of Wellington as impossible and absurd as they would have looked to the lofty intelligence of Cæsar. It can hardly be questioned that in original genius Napoleon far surpassed the Duke of Wellington. But Wellington always knew what he could do, and Napoleon often confounded his ambitions with his capacities. Wellington provided for everything, looked after everything, never trusted to his star, or to chance, or to anything but care and preparation and the proper application of means to ends. Under almost any conceivable conditions Wellington, pitted against Napoleon, was the man to win in the end. The very genius of Napoleon would sooner or later have left him open to the unsleeping watchfulness, the almost infallible judgment of Wellington. . . . It is impossible to compare two such men. There is hardly any common basis of comparison. To say which is the greater, one must first make up his mind as to whether his standard of greatness is genius or duty. Napoleon has made a far deeper impression on history.

I.

“ Oh, Wellington ! (or ‘ Villainton ’—for fame
 Sounds the heroic syllables both ways ;
 France could not even conquer your great name,
 But punn’d it down to this facetious phrase—
 Beating or beaten she will laugh the same)—
 You have obtain’d great pensions and much praise
 Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,
 Humanity would rise, and thunder, ‘ *Nay.*’¹⁶

Byron.

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III.

“ Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much,
 Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more :
 You have repair’d legitimacy’s crutch—
 A prop not quite so certain as before :
 The Spanish, and the French, as well as Dutch,
 Have seen, and felt, how strongly you *restore* ;
 And Waterloo has made the world your debtor—
 (I wish your bards would sing it rather better).

IV.

“ You are ‘ the best of cut-throats ; ’—do not start ;
 The phrase is Shakespeare’s, and not misapplied ;
 War’s a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,
 Unless her cause by right be sanctified.
 If you have acted *once* a generous part,
 The world, not the world’s masters, will decide,
 And I shall be delighted to learn who,
 Save you and yours, have gain’d by Waterloo ?

If that be superior greatness, it would be scarcely possible for any national partiality to claim an equal place for Wellington. But Englishmen may be content with the reflection that their hero saved his country, and that Napoleon nearly

ruined his. . . . Wellington more nearly resembled Washington than Napoleon. He was a much greater soldier than Washington, but he was not on the whole so great a man.”

¹⁶ *Byron’s note.*—“ Query, Ney ?
 —*Printer’s Devil.*”

V.

Byron.

“I am no flatterer—you’ve supp’d full of flattery :
 They say you like it too—’tis no great wonder :
 He whose whole life has been assault and battery,
 At last may get a little tired of thunder,
 And swallowing eulogy much more than satire, he
 May like being praised for every lucky blunder,
 Called ‘Saviour of the Nations’—not yet saved,
 And ‘Europe’s Liberator’—still enslaved.

VI.

“I’ve done. Now go and dine from off the plate
 Presented by the Prince of the Brazils,
 And send the sentinel before your gate ¹⁷
 A slice or two from your luxurious meals :
 He fought, but has not fed so well of late ;
 Some hunger, too, they say the people feels :
 There is no doubt that you deserve your ration—
 But pray give back a little to the nation.

VII.

“I don’t mean to reflect—a man so great as
 You, my Lord Duke, is far above reflection.
 The high old Roman fashion, too, of Cincinnatus
 With modern history has but small connection ;
 Though as an Irishman you love potatoes
 You need not take them under your direction ;
 And half a million for your Sabine farm
 Is rather dear !—I’m sure I mean no harm.

¹⁷ *Byron’s note.*—“I at this time got a post, being for fatigue, with four others. We were sent to break biscuit and make a mess for Lord Wellington’s hounds. I was very hungry, and thought it a good job at the time, as we got our own fill while we broke the biscuit—a

thing I had not got for some days. When thus engaged, the Prodigal Son was never once out of my mind ; and I sighed, as I fed the dogs, over my humble situation and my ruined hopes.’—*Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regiment during the War in Spain.*”

VIII.

“Great men have always scorn’d great recompenses.

Byron.

Epaminonda saved his Thebes, and died,
Not leaving even his funeral expenses :

George Washington had thanks and nought beside
Except the all-countless glory (which few men’s is)
To free his country ! Pitt, too, had his pride,
And, as a high-soul’d minister of state, is
Renown’d for ruining Great Britain, gratis.

IX.

“Never had mortal man such opportunity,

Except Napoleon, or abused it more :

You might have freed fall’n Europe from the unity

Of tyrants, and been bless’d from shore to shore ;

And *now*—what *is* your fame ? Shall the Muse tune it ye ?

Now—that the rabble’s first vain shouts are o’er ?

Go, hear it in your famish’d country’s cries !

Behold the world ! and curse your victories !

X.

“As these new cantos touch on warlike feats,

To *you* the unflattering Muse deigns to inscribe

Truths that you will not read in the Gazettes ;

But which, ’tis time to teach the hireling tribe

Who fatten on their country’s gore and debts,

Must be recited, and—without a bribe.

You *did great* things ; but, not being *great* in mind,

Have left *undone* the *greatest*—and mankind.”

Byron’s bitter lines were well on the way to be forgotten when Tennyson—who had succeeded Wordsworth as Poet-Laureate at the close of the year 1850—produced, as the first of his official poems, his *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*. Perhaps because of its length, perhaps because it is of another order of poetry than that by which its writer has commanded

Tennyson.

Tennyson.

admiration, the ode is generally respected rather than enjoyed or known. It will no doubt endure as a stately monument to "England's greatest son," but it will never be read through by thousands who have *The Charge of the Light Brigade* at their tongues' end and study the *Idylls of the King*.

"ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

I.

"Bury the Great Duke

With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke

To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation.
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

"Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

"Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow!
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

"Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.

Tennyson.

O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute :
 Mourn for the man of long enduring blood,
 The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
 Whole in himself, a common good.
 Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
 Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
 Our greatest, yet with least pretence,
 Great in council and great in war,
 Foremost captain of his time,
 Rich in saving common-sense,
 And, as the greatest only are,
 In his simplicity sublime.
 O good grey head, which all men knew,
 O voice, from which their omens all men drew,
 O iron nerve, to true occasion true,
 O fall'n at length that tower of strength
 Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew !
 Such was he whom we deplore.
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
 The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V.

All is over and done :
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 England, for thy son.
 Let the bell be toll'd.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 And render him to the mould.
 Under the cross of gold
 That shines over city and river,
 There he shall rest for ever
 Among the wise and the bold.
 Let the bell be toll'd :
 And a reverent people behold
 The towering car, the sable steeds :
 Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
 Dark in its funeral fold.
 Let the bell be toll'd :

Tennyson.

And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd,
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss ;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's ear has heard them boom,
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

“ Who is he that cometh like an honoured guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest ?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man.
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea ;
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee ;

Tennyson.

For this is England's greatest son,
He that gained a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun ;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clashed with his fiery few and won ;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Followed up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings ;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler down ;
A day of onsets of despair !
Dash'd on every rocky square,
Their surging charges foamed themselves away ;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew :
Through the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept, and charged, and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo !

Tennyson.

Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all,
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
 In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
 Eternal honour to his name.

VII.

"A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers ;
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
 His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
 We have a voice with which to pay the debt
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret
 To those great men who fought and kept it ours.
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
 And save the one true seed of freedom sown
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
 That sober freedom out of which there springs
 Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust.

Tennyson.

Remember him who led your hosts ;
 He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall ;
 His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever ; and whatever tempests lour
 For ever silent ; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent ; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke ;
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ;
 Who let the turbid streams of Rumour flow
 Thro' either babbling world of high and low ;
 Whose life was work, whose language rife
 With rugged maxims hewn from life ;
 Who never spoke against a foe ;
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right :
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named ;
 Truth-lover was our English Duke ;
 Whatever record leap to light,
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

“ Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He on whom from both her open hands
 Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
 Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great,
 But as he saves or serves the state.
 Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory :
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes,
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.

Tennyson.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevailed,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he : his work is done,
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure,
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory :
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illuminated cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX.

"Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see :
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung :
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain !
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere ;

Tennyson.

We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,
 And brawling memories all too free
 For such a wise humility
 As befits a solemn fane :
 We revere, and while we hear
 The tides of Music's golden sea
 Setting toward eternity,
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
 Until we doubt not that for one so true
 There must be other nobler work to do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,
 And victor he must ever be.
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill,
 And break the shore, and evermore
 Make and break, and work their will ;
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
 Round us, each with different powers,
 And other forms of life than ours,
 What know we greater than the soul ?
 On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
 Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears :
 The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears ;
 The black earth yawns ; the mortal disappears ;
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
 He is gone who seem'd so great.—
 Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 Something far advanced in State,
 And that he wears a truer crown
 Than any wreath that man can weave him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 And in your vast cathedral leave him.
 God accept him, Christ receive him."

Napoleon, three weeks before his death, had "written Thackeray.
 entirely by my hand," as he said, a codicil to his will—

Thackeray. "I desire that my ashes shall repose on the banks of the Seine, in the midst of the French people whom I loved so well." While the unmitigated Bourbons swayed France no regard was paid to the wish of the dying Emperor. But when Louis Philippe was upon the throne, and Thiers had become prime minister, application was made to the British Government for the necessary permission, and Lord Palmerston made this graceful reply:—

"The Government of her Britannic Majesty hopes that the promptness of its answer may be considered in France as a proof of its desire to blot out the last trace of those national animosities which, during the life of the Emperor, armed France and England against each other. The British government hopes that, if such sentiments survive anywhere, they may be buried in the tomb about to receive the remains of Napoleon."¹⁸

At the time of the arrival of Napoleon's body in France and of the splendid ceremonial attending its

¹⁸ Lord Palmerston's speaking of "the Emperor" and "Napoleon" in an official despatch marked the change of English sentiment since

Napoleon's death. At that time the officers of his St. Helena household had a gravestone prepared, with the inscription,

NAPOLEON.

BORN AT AJACCIO THE 15TH OF AUGUST, 1769.
DIED AT ST. HELENA THE 5TH OF MAY, 1821.

This Sir Hudson Lowe—"by name, and ah! by Nature, so"—refused them permission to place over his grave, saying that the British Government—Lord Liverpool being still premier—had forbidden the use of

any other words than "*General Bonaparte*." Byron recorded the incident in *The Age of Bronze*, when referring to St. Helena as Napoleon's burial-place:—

"—— His jailer, duteous to the last,
Scarce deem'd his coffin's lid could keep him fast,
Refusing one poor line along the lid
To date the birth and death of all it hid."

being placed in the Hôtel des Invalides (December 15, 1840) Thackeray was in Paris. Much no doubt was going on about him to suggest the retrospect which he traces out so vividly in the most elaborate and sustained of all his ballads, *The Chronicle of the Drum*. So far as could be supposed then—for no imagination except Prince Louis Napoleon's could at that time have formed an idea of the Second Empire—the Napoleonic Legend had been completed, and it only remained to record it. This, and also the long train of preparatory events which had rendered Napoleonism possible, Thackeray set forth, putting the story into the mouth of his Drummer, who, in his own person or represented in his ancestors, had played, he was thoroughly assured, no mean part in the glories and vicissitudes of France from the splendid days of Louis XIV to the downfall of Napoleon.¹⁹

¹⁹ For those who find it interesting to trace the growth of a notable poem it will be worth while to turn back from Thackeray's *Chronicle* to Heine's *Ideas—Book Le Grand*, published in 1826. In his seventh chapter the narrator has given his boyish recollection of "the French Drummer who was so long quartered in our house [at Düsseldorf], who looked like the Devil, and yet had the good heart of an angel, and who above all this drummed so divinely." This genius, Heine says, knew no German, yet made himself understood. "For instance, if I knew not what the word *liberté* meant, he drummed the *Marseillaise*—and I understood him. If I did not understand the word *égalité*, he drummed the march,

“Ça ira, ça ira, ça ira,
Les aristocrates à la Lanterne !”

. . . In like manner he taught me modern history. I did not understand, it is true, the words which he spoke, but, as he constantly drummed while speaking, I understood him. . . . The history of the storming of the Bastille, of the Tuileries, and the like, cannot be correctly understood until we know how *the drumming* was done on such occasions. . . . When you hear the red march of the guillotine *drummed* you understand it correctly for the first time, and, with it, the how and the why." Heine drops Drummer Le Grand in this seventh chapter, but in the tenth relates how, revisiting Düsseldorf in after years, he fell asleep on a bench in the Court-garden and dreamed of a band of French soldiers returning from Siberian prisons. "Singulantly enough, they were preceded by a drummer, who tottered along with a drum, and I shuddered

Thackeray.

"THE CHRONICLE OF THE DRUM.

PART I.

"At Paris, hard by the Maine barriers,
 Whoever will choose to repair,
 Midst a dozen of wooden-legged warriors
 May haply fall in with old Pierre.
 On the sunshiny bench of a tavern
 He sits and he prates of old wars,
 And moistens his pipe of tobacco
 With a drink that is named after Mars.

as I recalled the old legend of soldiers
 who had fallen in battle, and who by
 night, rising again from their graves
 on the battlefield, and with the

drummer at their head, marched
 back to their native city. And of
 them the old ballad sings thus:—

"He beat on the drum with might and main,
 To their old night-quarters they go again;
 Through the lighted street they come;
 Trallerie—trallerei—trallera,
 They march before sweetheart's home.

"Thus the dead return ere break of day,
 Like tombstones white in their cold array,
 And the drummer he goes before;
 Trallerie—trallerei—trallera,
 And we see them come no more."

In the spectre drummer the dreamer
 recognises Le Grand. "He too re-
 cognised me, and drew me to the
 turf, and we sat down together as
 of old, when he taught me on the
 drum French and Modern History.
 He had still the well-known old
 drum, and I could not sufficiently
 wonder how he had preserved it from
 Russian plunderers. And he drummed
 again as of old, but without speak-
 ing a word. . . . He drummed, as
 before, the old battles, the deeds of
 the Emperor, and it seemed as
 though the drum itself were a living
 creature which rejoiced to speak

out its inner soul. I heard once
 more the cannon thunder, the whist-
 ling of balls, the riot of battle, the
 death-rage of the Guard—I saw
 once more the waving flags, again
 the Emperor on his steed. . . . Le
 Grand's eyes opened spirit-like and
 wide, and I saw in them nothing
 but a broad white field of ice
 covered with corpses—it was the
 battle of Moscow." The passage is
 longer and is poetic in its ending;
 but enough has been written to
 show the germ of the *Chronicle of
 the Drum* fifteen years before Thack-
 eray elaborated it so admirably. It

"The beer makes his tongue run the quicker,
 And as long as his tap never fails,
 Thus over his favourite liquor
 Old Peter will tell his old tales.
 Says he, 'In my life's ninety summers
 Strange changes and chances I've seen,—
 So here's to all gentlemen drummers
 That ever have thump'd on a skin.

Thackeray.
—

"Brought up in the art military
 For four generations we are ;
 My ancestors drumm'd for King Harry,
 The Huguenot lad of Navarre.

may also be compared with what have already been referred to as "spectral poems." = Heine, again, had been anticipated by the English painter, B. R. Haydon, who, visiting Fontainebleau in 1814, during Napoleon's Elban exile, made a note that might serve as Thackeray's text:—"The evening was delicious; the fountain worthy of Armida's garden; the poetry of my mind unearthly for the time; when the crash of the Imperial drums, beating

with a harsh unity that stamped them as the voices of veterans in war, woke me from my reverie, and made my heart throb. Never did I hear such drums before; there were years of battle and blood in every sound." = In contrast with these celebrations of the drum may be quoted a little piece by a copious but well-nigh forgotten writer of the last century—John Scott, of Amwell, said to have been the only English Quaker poet previous to Bernard Barton:—

"ODE ON HEARING THE DRUM.

"I hate that drum's discordant sound,
 Parading round, and round, and round :
 To thoughtless youth it pleasure yields,
 And lures from cities and from fields,
 To sell their liberty for charms
 Of tawdry lace and glittering arms;
 And when Ambition's voice commands,
 To march, and fight, and fall in foreign lands.

"I hate that drum's discordant sound,
 Parading round, and round, and round:
 To me it talks of ravaged plains,
 And burning towns, and ruined swains,
 And mangled limbs, and dying groans,
 And widows' tears, and orphans' moans;
 And all that misery's hand bestows
 To fill the catalogue of human woes."

Thackeray.

And as each man in life has his station
According as Fortune may fix,
While Condé was waving the bâton,
My grandsire was trolling the sticks.

“Ah! those were the days for commanders!
What glories my grandfather won,
Ere bigots, and lackeys, and panders
The fortunes of France had undone!
In Germany, Flanders, and Holland,—
What foeman resisted us then?
No; my grandsire was ever victorious,
My grandsire and Monsieur Turenne.

“He died: and our noble battalions
The jade fickle Fortune forsook;
And at Blenheim, in spite of our valiance,
The victory lay with Malbrook.
The news it was brought to King Louis;
Corbleu! how his Majesty swore
When he heard they had taken my grandsire,
And twelve thousand gentlemen more.

“At Namur, Ramillies, and Malplaquet,
Were we posted, on plain or in trench:
Malbrook only need to attack it
And away from him scamper'd we French.
Cheer up! 'tis no use to be glum, boys,—
'Tis written, since fighting begun,
That sometimes we fight and we conquer,
And sometimes we fight and we run.

“To fight and to run was our fate:
Our fortune and fame had departed.
And so perish'd Louis the Great,—
Old, lonely, and half broken-hearted.
His coffin they pelted with mud,
His body they tried to lay hands on;
And so, having buried King Louis,
They loyally served his great-grandson

“ God save the beloved King Louis !
 (For so he was nicknamed by some,)
And now came my father to do his
 King's orders and beat on the drum.
My grandsire was dead, but his bones
 Must have shaken, I'm certain, for joy,
To hear daddy drumming the English
 From the meadows of famed Fontenoy.

“ So well did he drum in that battle
 That the enemy showed us their backs ;
Corbleu ! it was pleasant to rattle
 The sticks, and to follow old Saxe !
We next had Soubise as a leader,
 And as luck hath its changes and fits,
At Rossbach, in spite of dad's drumming,
 'Tis said we were beaten by Fritz.

“ And now daddy cross'd the Atlantic,
 To drum for Montcalm and his men ;
Morbleu ! but it makes a man frantic
 To think we were beaten again !
My daddy he cross'd the wide ocean,
 My mother brought me on her neck,
And we came in the year fifty-seven
 To guard the good town of Quebec.

“ In the year fifty-nine came the Britons,—
 Full well I remember the day,—
They knocked at our gate for admittance,
 Their vessels were moored in our bay.
Says our general, ‘ Drive me yon red-coats
 Away to the sea whence they come ! ’
So we march'd against Wolfe and his bull-dogs,
 We marched at the sound of the drum.

“ I think I can see my poor mammy
 With me in her hand as she waits,
And our regiment, slowly retreating,
 Pours back through the citadel gates.

Thackeray.

Dear mammy, she looks in their faces,
And asks if her husband is come ?
—He is lying all cold on the glacis,
And will never more beat on the drum.

“Come, drink, ’tis no use to be glum, boys,
He died like a soldier in glory ;
Here’s a glass to the health of all drum-boys,
And now I’ll commence my own story.
Once more did we cross the salt ocean,
We came in the year eighty-one ;
And the wrongs of my father the drummer
Were avenged by the drummer, his son.

“In Chesapeake Bay we were landed ;
In vain strove the British to pass ;
Rochambeau our armies commanded,
Our ships they were led by De Grasse.
Morbleu ! how I rattled the drumsticks
The day we march’d into Yorktown ;
Ten thousand of beef-eating British
Their weapons we caused to lay down.

“Then homeward returning victorious,
In peace to our country we came,
And were thanked for our glorious actions
By Louis Sixteenth of the name.
What drummer on earth could be prouder
Than I while I drummed at Versailles
To the lovely court ladies in powder,
And lappets, and long satin tails ?

“The princes that day pass’d before us,
Our countrymen’s glory and hope ;
Monsieur, who was learned in Horace,
D’Artois, who could dance the tight-rope.
One night we kept guard for the Queen,
At her Majesty’s opera box,
While the King, that majestical monarch,
Sat filing at home at his locks.

“ Yes, I drumm’d for the fair Antoinette,
And so smiling she looked and so tender,
That our officers, privates, and drummers
All vow’d they would die to defend her.
But she cared not for us, honest fellows,
Who fought and who bled in her wars;
She sneered at our gallant Rochambeau,
And turned La Fayette out of doors.

“ Ventrebleu ! then I swore a great oath
No more to such tyrants to kneel,
And so, just to keep up my drumming,
One day I drumm’d down the Bastille.
Ho, landlord, a stoup of fresh wine :
Come, comrades, a bumper we’ll try,
And drink to the year eighty-nine,
And the glorious fourth of July !

“ Then bravely our cannon it thunder’d,
As onwards our patriots bore ;
Our enemies were but a hundred,
And we twenty thousand or more.
They carried the news to King Louis,
He heard it as calm as you please,
And, like a majestical monarch,
Kept filing his locks and his keys.

“ We show’d our republican courage,
We storm’d and we broke the great gate in,
And we murder’d the insolent governor,
For daring to keep us a-waiting.
Lambesc and his squadrons stood by,
They never stirr’d finger or thumb ;
The saucy aristocrats trembled
As they heard the republican drum.

“ Hurrah ! what a storm was a-brewing :
The day of our vengeance was come !
Through scenes of what carnage and ruin
Did I beat on the patriot drum !

Thackeray.

Let's drink to the fam'd tenth of August :
 At midnight I beat the tattoo,
 And woke up the pikemen of Paris
 To follow the bold Barbaroux.

"With pipes, and with shouts, and with torches
 March'd onwards our dusty battalions,
 And we girt the tall castle of Louis,
 A million of tatterdemalions !
 We storm'd the fair gardens where tower'd
 The walls of his heritage splendid.
 Ah, shame on him, craven and coward,
 That had not the heart to defend it !

"With the crown of his sires on his head,
 His nobles and knights by his side,
 At the foot of his ancestors' palace
 'Twere easy, methinks, to have died.
 But no ; when we burst through his barriers,
 'Mid heaps of the dying and dead,
 In vain through the chambers we sought him ;
 He had turn'd like a craven and fled.

.

"You all know the Place de la Concorde,
 'Tis hard by the Tuileries wall ;
 'Mid terraces, fountains, and statues,
 There rises an obelisk tall.
 There rises an obelisk tall,
 All garnished and gilded the base is :
 'Tis surely the gayest of all
 Our beautiful city's gay places.

"Around it are gardens and flowers,
 And the Cities of France on their thrones,
 Each crown'd with his circlet of flowers,
 Sit watching this biggest of stones !
 I love to go sit in the sun there,
 The flowers and fountains to see,
 And to think of the deeds that were done there
 In the glorious year ninety-three.

“ ’Twas here stood the Altar of Freedom,
And though neither marble nor gilding
Was used in those days to adorn
Our simple republican building,
Corbleu ! but the MÈRE GUILLOTINE
Cared little for splendour or show,
So you gave her an axe and a beam,
And a plank and a basket or so.

“ Awful, and proud, and erect,
Here sat our republican goddess ;
Each morning her table we decked
With dainty aristocrats’ bodies.
The people each day flocked around
As she sat at her meat and her wine :
’Twas always the use of our nation
To witness the sovereign dine.

“ Young virgins with fair golden tresses,
Old silver-hair’d prelates and priests,
Dukes, marquises, barons, princesses,
There splendidly served at her feasts.
Ventrebleu ! but we pamper’d our ogress
With the best that our nation could bring,
And dainty she grew in her progress,
And called for the head of a king !

“ She called for the blood of our King,
And straight from his prison we drew him ;
And to her with shouting we led him,
And took him, and bound him, and slew him.

“ The monarchs of Europe against me
Have plotted a godless alliance :
I’ll fling them the head of King Louis,
She said, ‘ as my gage of defiance.’

“ I see him as now, for a moment,
Away from his gaolers he broke ;
And stood at the foot of the scaffold,
And lingered, and fain would have spoke.

Thackeray.

‘Ho, drummer ! quick ! silence yon Capet,’
 Says Santerre, ‘with a beat of your drum.’
 Lustily then did I tap it
 And the son of St. Louis was dumb.

.

PART II.

“The glorious days of September
 Saw many aristocrats fall ;
 ’Twas then that our pikes drunk the blood
 In the beautiful breast of Lamballe—
 Pardi, ’twas a beautiful lady !
 I seldom have looked on her like ;
 And I drumm’d for a gallant procession,
 That marched with her head on a pike.

“Let’s show the pale head to the Queen,
 We said—she’ll remember it well.
 She looked from the bars of her prison,
 And shriek’d as she saw it, and fell.
 We set up a shout at her screaming,
 We laugh’d at the fright she had shown
 At the sight of the head of her minion ;
 How she’d tremble to part with her own !

“We had taken the head of King Capet,
 We called for the blood of his wife ;
 Undaunted she came to the scaffold,
 And bared her fair neck to the knife.
 As she felt the foul fingers that touched her
 She shrank, but she deigned not to speak :
 She look’d with a royal disdain,
 And died with a blush on her cheek !

“’Twas thus that our country was saved ;
 So told us the safety committee !
 But psha ! I’ve the heart of a soldier,
 All gentleness, mercy, and pity :
 I loathed to assist at such deeds,
 And my drum beat its loudest of tunes
 As we offered to justice offended
 The blood of the bloody tribunes.

“Away with such foul recollections !
No more of the axe and the block ;
I saw the last fight of the sections,
As they fell 'neath our guns at Saint Rock.
Young BONAPARTE led us that day :
When he sought the Italian frontier,
I follow'd my gallant young captain,
I follow'd him many a long year.

“We came to an army in rags ;
Our general was but a boy
When we first saw the Austrian flags
Flaunt proud in the fields of Savoy.
In the glorious year ninety-six,
We march'd to the banks of the Po ;
I carried my drum and my sticks,
And we laid the proud Austrian low.

“In triumph we entered Milan,
We seized on the Mantuan keys ;
The troops of the Emperor ran,
And the Pope he fell down on his knees.”—
Pierre's comrades here called a fresh bottle,
And clubbing together their wealth,
They drank to the army of Italy,
And General Bonaparte's health.

The drummer now bared his old breast,
And show'd us plenty of scars,
Rude presents that Fortune had made him
In fifty victorious wars.

“This came when I follow'd bold Kleber—
'Twas shot by a Mameluke gun ;
And this from an Austrian sabre,
When the field of Marengo was won.

“My forehead has many deep furrows,
But this is the deepest of all :
A Brunswicker made it at Jena
Beside the fair river of Saal

Thackeray.

This cross, 'twas the Emperor gave it
(God bless him!) it covers a blow;
I had it at Austerlitz fight,
As I beat on my drum in the snow.

“ 'Twas thus that we conquer'd and fought;
But wherefore continue the story?
There's never a baby in France
But has heard of our chief and our glory,—
But has heard of our chief and our fame,
His sorrows and triumphs can tell,
How bravely Napoleon conquer'd,
How bravely and sadly he fell.

“ It makes my old heart to beat higher,
To think of the deeds that I saw;
I follow'd bold Ney through the fire,
And charged at the side of Murat.”
And so did old Peter continue
His story of twenty brave years;
His audience follow'd with comments—
Rude comments of curses and tears.

He told how the Prussians in vain
Had died in defence of their land;
His audience laugh'd at the story,
And vow'd that their captain was grand!
He had fought the red English, he said,
In many a battle of Spain;
They cursed the red English, and prayed
To meet them and fight them again.

He told them how Russia was lost,
Had winter not driven them back,
And his company cursed the quick frost,
And doubly they cursed the Cossack.
He told how the stranger arrived;
They wept at the tale of disgrace;
And they long'd but for one battle more,
The stain of their shame to efface.

- “ Our country their hordes overrun ;
 We fled to the fields of Champagne,
 And fought them, though twenty to one,
 And beat them again and again !
 Our warrior was conquer’d at last ;
 They bade him his crown to resign ;
 To fate and his country he yielded
 The rights of himself and his line.
- “ He came, and among us he stood,
 Around him we press’d in a throng :
 We could not regard him for weeping,
 Who had led us and loved us so long.
 ‘ I have led you for twenty long years,’
 Napoleon said, ere he went ;
 ‘ Wherever was honour I found you,
 And with you, my sons, am content !
- “ ‘ Though Europe against me was armed,
 Your chiefs and my people are true ;
 I still might have struggled with fortune,
 And baffled all Europe with you.
- “ ‘ But France would have suffer’d the while,
 ’Tis best that I suffer alone ;
 I go to my place of exile,
 To write of the deeds we have done.
- “ ‘ Be true to the king that they give you.
 We may not embrace ere we part ;
 But, General, reach me your hand,
 And press me, I pray, to your heart.’
- “ He call’d for our old battle standard ;
 One kiss to the eagle he gave ;
 ‘ Dear eagle,’ he said, ‘ may this kiss
 Long sound in the hearts of the brave !’
 ’Twas thus that Napoleon left us ;
 Our people were weeping and mute,
 As he passed through the lines of his Guard,
 And our drums beat the notes of salute.
-

Thackeray.

“I look’d, when the drumming was o’er,
I looked, but our hero was gone;
We were destined to see him once more,
When we fought on the Mount of St. John.
The Emperor rode through our files:
’Twas June, and a fair Sunday morn;
The lines of our warriors for miles
Stretch’d wide through the Waterloo corn.

“In thousands we stood on the plain,
The red-coats were crowning the height;
‘Go scatter yon English,’ he said;
‘We’ll sup, lads, at Brussels to-night.’
We answered his voice with a shout;
Our eagles were bright in the sun;
Our drums and our cannon spoke out,
And the thundering battle begun.

“One charge to another succeeds,
Like waves that a hurricane bears;
All day do our galloping steeds
Dash fierce on the enemy’s squares.
At noon we began the fell onset;
We charged up the Englishman’s hill,
And madly we charged it at sunset—
His banners were floating there still.

“Go to! I will tell you no more;
You know how the battle was lost.
Ho! fetch me a beaker of wine,
And, comrades, I’ll give you a toast.
I’ll give you a curse on all traitors,
Who plotted our Emperor’s ruin;
And a curse on those red-coated English,
Whose bayonets help’d our undoing.

“A curse on those British assassins,
Who order’d the slaughter of Ney;
A curse on Sir Hudson, who tortured
The life of our hero away.

A curse on all Russians—I hate them—
On all Prussian and Austrian fry ;
And oh ! but I pray we may meet them,
And fight them again ere I die.”

’Twas thus old Peter did conclude
His chronicle with curses fit ;
He spoke the tale in accents rude,
In ruder verse I copied it.

Perhaps the tale a moral bears,
(All tales in time to this must come),
The story of two hundred years
Writ on the parchment of a drum.

What Peter told with drum and stick
Is endless theme for poets’ pen ;
Is found in endless quartos thick,
Enormous books by learned men.

And ever since historian writ,
And ever since a bard could sing,
Doth each exalt with all his wit
The noble art of murdering.

We love to read the glorious page,
How bold Achilles killed his foe ;
And Turnus, fell’d by Trojan’s rage,
Went howling to the shades below ;

How Godfrey led his red-cross knights,
How mad Orlando slash’d and slew :
There’s not a single bard that writes
But doth the glorious theme renew.

And while, in fashion picturesque,
The poet rhymes of blood and blows,
The grave historian at his desk
Describes the same in classic prose.

Go read the works of Reverend Cox,
You’ll duly see recorded there
The history of the self-same knocks
Here roughly sung by Drummer Pierre.

Thackeray.

Of battles fierce and warriors big,
He writes in phrases dull and slow,
And waves his cauliflower wig,
And shouts "Saint George for Marlborow!"

Take Doctor Southey from the shelf,
An LL.D.,—a peaceful man;
Good Lord, how doth he plume himself
Because we beat the Corsican!

From first to last his page is filled
With stirring tales how blows were struck;
He shows how we the Frenchmen kill'd,
And praises God for our good luck.

Some hints, 'tis true, of politics
The doctors give, and statesman's art:
Pierre only bangs his drum and sticks,
And understands the bloody part.

He cares not what the cause may be,
He is not nice for wrong and right;
But show him where's the enemy,
He only asks to drum and fight.

They bid him fight,—perhaps he wins.
And when he tells the story o'er,
The honest savage brags and grins,
And only longs to fight once more.

But luck may change, and valour fail,
Our drummer, Peter, meets reverse,
And with a moral points his tale—
The end of all such tales—a curse.

Last year, my love, it was my hap
Behind a grenadier to be,
And, but he wore a hairy cap,
No taller man, methinks, than me.

Prince Albert and the Queen, God wot,
(Be blessings on the glorious pair!)
Before us passed; I saw them not,
I only saw a cap of hair.

Thackeray.

Your orthodox historian puts
 In foremost rank the soldier thus,
 The red-coat bully in his boots,
 That hides the march of men from us.

He puts him there in foremost rank ;
 You wonder at his cap of hair ;
 You hear his sabre's cursed clank,
 His spurs are jingling everywhere.

Go to ! I hate him and his trade :
 Who bade us so to cringe and bend,
 And all God's peaceful people made
 To such as him subservient ?

Tell me what find we to admire
 In epaulets and scarlet coats :
 In men, because they load and fire,
 And know the art of cutting throats ?

.

Ah, gentle, tender lady mine !
 The winter wind blows cold and shrill,
 Come, fill me one more glass of wine,
 And give the silly fools their will.

And what care we for war and wrack,
 How kings and heroes rise and fall ?
 Look yonder, in his coffin black.
 There lies the greatest of them all !

To pluck him down, and keep him up,
 Died many million human souls.
 'Tis twelve o'clock, and time to sup ;
 Bid Mary heap the fire with coals.

He captured many thousand guns ;
 He wrote "The Great" before his name ;
 And dying, only left his sons
 The recollection of his shame.

Thackeray.

Though more than half the world was his,
He died without a rood his own,
And borrow'd from his enemies
Six foot of ground to lie upon.

He fought a thousand glorious wars,
And more than half the world was his,
And somewhere now, in yonder stars,
Can tell, mayhap, what greatness is.

Macaulay.

Until after Lord Macaulay's death it was not generally known that he had been among the poets of Waterloo, except on the occasion of his unsuccessful University prize-poem, already mentioned.²⁰ His having written other verses on the subject was disclosed by a London publisher, Mr. John Camden Hotten, who addressed to the *Athenæum* a letter in which he spoke of Macaulay's juvenile poems, and said in particular that "The memorable defeat of Napoleon engaged his youthful attention, and the family received from his pen a poem entitled *Waterloo*, and another *An Inscription for the Column of Waterloo*, on occasion of the obelisk being erected on the famous battlefield." These and other productions, it was added, were contained in "an old album recently discovered," and the intimation was that they would be published. Hereupon the solicitor to his executors sent to the *Athenæum* a communication which said—

"What is called in Mr. Hotten's letter an album is, in fact, a manuscript belonging to a member of his lordship's family, and . . . the manuscript had very recently got by mistake out of the hands of the owner, to whom it has been since restored, and who has no intention of publishing any of the contents of the MS. which have not yet been published. Should any such publication be attempted by others, it would be at once restrained."

²⁰ See p. 443; also note 140, p. 223.

Macaulay's *Life and Letters*, published some years later (in 1876) by his nephew, G. Otto Trevelyan, make no mention of this particular poem, though they refer to a *Pindaric Ode* written by him on the occasion of Napoleon's flight from Russia—when Macaulay was twelve years old—and a petition for a holiday which, at the instigation of his school-fellows, he addressed to his tutor on the occasion of the Allies entering Paris. This poem, we are told, "begins with a few sonorous and effective couplets, grows more and more like the parody on Fitzgerald in *Rejected Addresses*, and ends in a peroration of which the intention is unquestionably mock-heroic :

" Oh, by the glorious posture of affairs,
By the enormous price that Omnium bears,
By princely Bourbon's late recovered Crown,
And by Miss Fanny's safe return from town,
Oh, do not thou, and thou alone, refuse
To show thy pleasure at this glorious news ! "

Beyond this, the biographer suppresses Macaulay's Waterloo poems. To them probably applies the same sentiment as to his still more juvenile productions—"The affection of the last generation of his relatives has preserved all these poems, but the piety of this generation will refrain from submitting them to public criticism. A marginal note, in which Macaulay has expressed his cordial approval of Uncle Toby's remark about the great Lipsius, indicates his own wishes in the matter too clearly to leave any choice for those who come after him."²¹

²¹ The great Lipsius was referred to on an occasion when the paternal Shandy was consoling himself after one of the infantile Tristram's misadventures. He has spoken of

" "those prodigies of childhood in Grotius, Scioppius, Heinsius, Politian, Pascal, Joseph Scaliger, Ferdinand de Cordue, and others. . . . Others were masters of fourteen

Macaulay.

languages at ten [years old],—
finished the course of their rhetoric,
poetry, logic, and ethics, at eleven,—
put forth their commentaries upon
Servius and Martianus Capella at
twelve,—and at thirteen received
their degrees in philosophy, laws,

and divinity.’—‘But you forget the
great Lipsiùs,’ quoth Yorick, ‘who
composed a work the day he was
born.’” Uncle Toby’s remark was
a sententious one as to the proper
disposal of the “work” in question.
—*Tristram Shandy*, chap. clxiii.

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